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Education and
The Movies
Edgar Dale

Listening to
"The Lonesome Train"
Lenore Dakin

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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Education and the Movies

EDGAR DALE¹

HAVE EDUCATION and the movies come closer together in the past five years? There are several approaches to this problem. I shall try to answer the question under four sub-questions:

1. Have the educator and the Hollywood producer come closer together?
2. Have the schools made wider and more significant use of films?
3. What did the war do to the use of films by the schools?
4. What have we learned about the film as a communication medium which might be of value to teachers of English?

Let us take the first question: Have the educator and the Hollywood producer come closer together? The answer is an unequivocal "No!" We are just as far apart as ever. Indeed, our goals are usually either opposed or unrelated. The aim of the school is to educate, that of the film producer to make money. One aims to improve the public welfare, the other to make private gain. I am not chiding the industry for this, I am just stating a fact. If they can entertain, they can make money. Whether they inform, instruct, clarify—is irrelevant

¹Professor of Education, Ohio State University, and author of the new book, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*. This paper was delivered at the Atlantic City meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, Friday, Nov. 30, 1946.

and this irrelevance is shown clearly in the kinds of films that have been made in the past ten or fifteen years.

With the advent of the Legion of Decency some new substitute had to be found for the sex film. Sadism was substituted for sex—violence for vice. Let me give you some examples: *The Big Sleep*, *Falcon's Alibi*, *The Spiral Staircase*, *Gaslight*, and many others. Now it used to be that we had a lot of horror and violence on the screen—but to that has been added something new. Terror no longer stalks the land as typified by a monster created by Frankenstein or by a Dracula. Rather we have the Hitchcock approach where the usual trappings of villainy are not present. He appears in innocent guise. We must suspect everyone.

Now some of these terror films are done with skill and insight. This is not true, however, of the vast majority of films which make up the second half of a double bill. Here we have the raw materials of vice and tragedy—but without the skill of the artist in putting them together. Their tragedy evokes neither pity nor understanding. Instead I believe that in far too many instances emotional callousness results.

Some would point out that the American Council on Education's Committee on Motion Pictures received a grant of \$125,000 from the motion picture industry to find out what pictures need to be made. I understand that the industry is going to make seven films to show how such films should be made. Now I think these films will be fine, but they won't accomplish the mission which was projected.

If the motion picture industry really wishes to do something to help the schools, let them release the hundreds and perhaps thousands of army and navy films which need copyright clearance in order to make them available to the schools. Further, among this group there are dozens of examples of what the educator thinks of as an excellent film.

I suggest that Eric Johnston quit repeating the clichés of Will Hayes and do some of the creative, critical, constructive thinking in the film field that he did as head of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

He ought to realize by now that the motion picture industry does not occupy a high place in public esteem. I am not talking about Sam Goldwyn or the Warner Brothers who deserve high praise for many of the things they have done. I am talking about the total net effect of the industry as a whole.

For example, the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Denver asked the public this question: "Taking everything into consideration, which one of these do you think did the best job of serving the public during the war—magazines, newspapers, moving pictures, or radiobroadcasting?" . . . The votes were radio broadcasting 57%, newspaper 17%, moving pictures 4%, magazines 3%, undecided 9%.

The public as a whole is not antagonistic to the industry. They merely think of them as they would think of good bowling alleys, tightrope walkers, a good show on the Midway. The movies are a place to go of an evening. The film might not be so good but you can kill three hours there and the popcorn is fine.

Is there any way to resolve this apparent and perhaps quite real conflict between education and entertainment, excitement and enlightenment? Remember that as entertainment and excitement have increased in movies, radio, or the press, it has been at the expense of education and enlightenment.

I suggest that our great voluntary agencies band themselves together to produce dramatic films dealing with the critical problems of the day—atomic energy, international education, wholesome recreation, improvement of family living, mental health, juvenile delinquency, housing, the mechaniza-

tion of farming, our cotton economy. We need dozens of films in the field of human relations.

Why shouldn't teachers of English in high schools and colleges learn to write scripts for these films? Why not bring together the Grange, the Unions, the Farm Bureaus, the churches, and the service clubs to produce films in these fields.

Our University film production centers are going to be a source for this new type film.

During the war many young men had an opportunity to make pictures that meant something. Some did it in OWI, in the Office of the Coordinator of Interamerican Affairs, in the Signal Corps, in the Navy. What has happened to them? Are their talents being used to good advantage?

One chap that I know is producing Tarzan pictures. Maybe he thinks the apes are going to take over this world anyway and so he wants to get on good terms with the future rulers. Isn't it an ironic commentary on the lunacy of our day when we recruit the best brains to kill people but when the war is over we permit them to go back to making saccharine slop, horror and terror films, emotional lollypops?

"Ah, but," says the Hollywood apologist, "this is what the public demands." I deny this. By what devious logic could anyone argue that the public has demanded the host of second-feature films that we have had since double billing became popular?

But are there enough good writers to make really good films? Perhaps not. But what single measure has Hollywood ever taken to insure such a supply? Let me give an example to make my point. In 1934 I looked up a young chap in Hollywood who wrote for Welford Beaton's "Hollywood Spectator." His understanding of films was so acute and his writing so penetrating that I suggested he might sell his service

to the independents as a "script-doctor." He said, "They wouldn't pay me \$25 a week to do it." I noticed a couple of years ago in the *Motion Picture Herald* that he was paid a salary of \$75,000. His name is Dalton Trumbo and he wrote *Our Vines Have Tender Grapes*, *A Guy Named Joe*, *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*, and many other excellent films.

Now the woods aren't full of Dalton Trumbos, but some of them haven't been discovered. With a production program moving ahead outside of Hollywood, with opportunity for young men and women to develop their creative talents, our supply of able writers and directors could be considerably augmented. Hollywood, of course, should do this itself but its vision is myopic.

Our next two questions are: Have the schools made wider and more significant use of films? What did the war do to the use of films by the schools? I shall answer them together.

The schools are now using films much more than they ever have before. Film libraries like those at Wisconsin, Indiana, and Syracuse University, report sharp increases—doubling, tripling, quadrupling previous records. Within five years, except in the poorest states, nearly every school will have access to a 16 mm. projector. Within 10 years, most of our larger churches will have 16 mm. projectors.

Now this post-war growth is part of a trend that started before the war. But it has been accelerated by the successful experience with the production and use of films in connection with the OWI, the Coordinator of Interamerican Affairs, the U. S. Office of Education, and the factory incentive program developed by the army and navy in cooperation with the OWI.

The OWI developed some new ideas in mass communication that have been little publicized. Campaigns were developed in conservation of fats, victory gardens, price control, rationing, nutrition—which tied together magazine, news-

paper, motion picture, posters, public speakers—a multiple media approach.

The domestic motion picture division of OWI discovered that we could cover the country with 400 prints of each film. Some films were made by OWI, some by the motion picture industry. Unfortunately, most of this theatrical exhibition program has been abandoned. As a consequence you have not seen excellent materials dealing with famine and starvation abroad which once were planned as a part of this program.

Perhaps the most important films made during the war were those produced under the direction of Colonel Frank Capra. We had always known that we could tell an interesting, coherent, logical story in a two-reel documentary. So we were surprised and delighted when we saw full-length documentary films which were as interest-compelling as any of the excellent films produced by Hollywood. I am referring to such films as *The Nazis Strike*, *China Fights Back*, *Battle of Russia*, *Prelude to War*, and many others.

Let us take a look now at Question No. 4—the import of which is, “Why should teachers of English be concerned about this problem anyway?” Certainly the teacher of English is concerned about the improved communication of ideas relating to making the behavior of human beings a little less simian, and a little more humane. One excellent and time-honored way of doing this is through the reading of great books. Reading and discussing these great books (and this idea wasn’t invented by Dr. Hutchins) is one way of learning our relationships to each other, to the rest of the world. Such reading and discussion enable us in Aristotle’s phrase to “live examined lives.”

The motion picture is another excellent way of communicating ideas—a verbal-visual method of communication. The characters in the movies speak English prose. Sometimes they

do it mawkishly, sometimes ungrammatically, and sometimes beautifully. But it is nearly always clear and easily interpreted.

The motion picture may be made from an original story and it is a pity that we do not have more of them. Or it may be based on a book or a short story. No matter. Through word and image, ideas are created. These ideas have a dynamic quality. They initiate action, provide models for it.

It is the job of teachers of English to deal with ideas no matter what form they take. Now the ideas presented by movies deserve examination by critical minds. We need to note their effect upon international relations, their effect on human relationships. We want to note the artistry of the film or the lack of it. If the motion picture is worth thinking critically about, if it is worth writing and talking about, then it demands the attention of the teacher of English.

Yes, it is true that one of the big jobs of the teacher of English concerns itself with the art of verbal communication—no small task. But if this verbal communication is to be factually grounded, if it is to have richness and warmth of meaning, we shall have to concern ourselves more with the drama of human living as developed both by the stage and by the screen.

The teaching of motion picture discrimination has made some progress in the schools during the last fifteen years. But that progress has been pretty slow—almost glacial. A major handicap is the lack of film examples when we need them. Can you imagine teaching reading without books? That is often what we have to do—teach about films rather than with films. Excellent films are either not available a year or two after they are released, or schools are prevented from getting them by regulations of the film exchanges. We are not going to make too much progress in teaching film discrimination until we can have the films available right in the classroom.

Background for Listening to "The Lonesome Train"

LENORE DAKIN¹

I HAVE USED the following unit both in connection with Lincoln's Birthday and intercultural work, particularly during Negro History Week.

The Decca record album "The Lonesome Train" appealed to me so strongly that I wanted to use it with the children in the literature room. I felt that it needed considerable introduction in order to be enjoyed and understood. In order to prepare the children, I worked out the lesson below. After we had covered all the groundwork, I explained about the records.

The classes, ranging from the 4th to the 8th grades, responded as I hoped they would. They listened spellbound. Heads nodded and significant glances traveled around the room as the children recognized things which had come up in the discussion. Even the very delicate part where a colored congregation was holding a church service (which I was afraid would provoke some giggles) was accepted as naturally as the National Anthem.

After listening, the reactions of the children were: "It was beautiful." "I liked it." "I wish we could hear it again." "Thank you for playing it." "I'm glad we talked about it first. It was easier to understand." "I learned a lot of interesting things."

They were eager to quote parts of it which they remembered after hearing it just once. The post-listening questions were eagerly discussed. We listened to it several more times.

¹ A teacher in the Detroit Public Schools.

The children's interest increased with each listening, and before we finally put it away, some of the children were saying parts of it along with the cast.

Preparation

- I. February is the birthday of one of our greatest presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

I wonder just how much we know about him. Let's talk it over and list all the interesting things we know.

(for example)

Birth

Date—February 12, 1809.

Place—Kentucky.

Conditions—Very poor.

Childhood and education—one year of schooling in all—read everything he could lay his hands on—mother died when he was nine—stepmother was kind and understanding, efficient, prosperous, helped Abe get more education—he could read and write well at 14.

Characteristics and attributes—Honest—willing to work—eager to learn—strong—witty—humorous—good story teller—fair. His reaction to cruelty, unfairness, and slavery.

Married and lived in Springfield, Illinois.

Sixteenth President.

Two very important problems—Slavery, and preserving the Union.

Civil War (is everything O.K. when a war has been won?)

Emancipation Proclamation.

Death—April 14, 1865—Shock.

Reaction of various peoples. Why?

- II. It is 90 years since Lincoln's death, almost a century.

Many things have changed. (Picture of Lincoln)

How do his clothes compare with those of today?

Would Lincoln have won a place among the ten best dressed men? Why not?

What has he around his shoulders? (shawl) Why? What does this show about Lincoln?

Lincoln loved people and liked to have fun when he had time. There weren't as many ways in which to have fun as there are now, but he could go to a show (not a movie) and he could dance. What kind of dancing do you suppose he did? He wasn't especially good at dancing. I wonder why not? (awkward) Why wouldn't he be very popular? (homely) However, these things didn't keep him from enjoying a dance whenever he had a chance because he loved to dance.

- III. We told how Lincoln was killed. What do you know about John Wilkes Booth? Let's look him up in our World Book.

- IV. The word Copperhead was used during the Civil War just as Tory was used during the Revolutionary War and Fifth Columnist was used in World War II. What do you think a Copperhead was? Was it a good name for these people? Why?

- V. One of the important parts of the Bill of Rights is Freedom of Worship. Just what do we mean by this? How do different faiths conduct services? Discuss. Let children explain their church service. Formal, informal, etc. Just what is religion anyway? Expression of our inner feelings concerning God and spiritual things.

Read and discuss several Negro spirituals. Why are the words in these songs a bit strange to us?

Discuss origin. Vocabulary was limited. Why?

God was interpreted in the only language they knew, and understood. Talk about informality of colored services. Why?

What did religion do for the slaves? It gave them an escape from their awful existence. It was their only chance to release their pent-up emotions.

A colored church service in the time of Lincoln or in our own day might seem very strange to us. How would it seem to these people? What is our opinion of our own?

What do we expect of anyone visiting our church? How do we respect their type of worship? Reverence is something that has to do with God and Church. How can we show reverence? Is Freedom of Worship something you hold very dear? Is it all right for someone else to feel the same way about his?

The colored race is highly emotional by nature. The first slaves brought over were native African tribe people. Their rituals and ceremonies in worship took on a very spectacular and demonstrative form. It was natural that it should be carried over into whatever new religion they embraced. The contribution of Amen, yes, Lord, etc., by members of the congregation was the only participation in the service that some of them had.

Post-Listening Questions

Why is a funeral train lonesome?

Why did it make such a round-about trip to Springfield?

Why were some people glad when Lincoln died?

Why would he be found in a colored church?

How can some of the things you heard be applied to our times?
(brothers, freemen, concern for people who are oppressed, etc.)

What did you think of:

the sound effects

the voices and expressions

the music (what did it do for the story)?

What else would you like to say about it?

Here are a few things which were said at times while you were listening. Let us discuss them a bit.

Freedom's a thing that has no ending, it needs to be cared for, it needs defending.

You couldn't quite tell where the people left off and where Abe Lincoln began.

Lincoln was a common man. God must have loved the common people because he made so many of them.

He was made of stuff that doesn't die.

He was made of hope, he was made of fear, he was made to last a million years.

His heart was as tough as a railroad tie.

After every great war in the last hundred years, the defeated nation has turned to its educational system to strengthen itself. Perhaps the time has come for the victors to be wise. Can't we turn to our schools, not to avenge defeat, but to make victory certain? If as the charter of UNESCO avers, "wars begin in the minds of men," why don't we start working with these minds when they are immature, flexible? Why don't we start right now using the schools to help build excellent future homes, to build civic responsibility, to develop a nation and a world that is willing to do what is necessary to achieve worldwide peace and security?

EDGAR DALE

in the *News Letter*, December, 1946.

The Teacher's Problems in a Differentiated Reading Program

MARY C. WILSON*

FREQUENT STATEMENTS from supervisors to the effect that classroom teachers fail to carry out a differentiated program of reading instruction prompted the author to return to a usual classroom situation in an attempt to understand more fully why teachers do not carry out an individualized program of reading instruction. In theory and in practice, the author knew that teachers recently entering the profession had received instruction in the needs and values of a differentiated reading program. Why, then, did these inexperienced teachers as well as in-service teachers with similar knowledge fail to carry such a program into classroom practice?

Permission was obtained from a parish superintendent to work for one hour each day throughout the school year in a third grade classroom of one of the community schools. The author agreed to assume full responsibility for pursuing a differentiated procedure for the work-type phase of the reading program. In addition, she agreed to work with the regular classroom teacher in advising on plans and procedures for the study-informational and recreational phases of the reading program.

The Class

The third-grade situation chosen for the year's work was representative of a rural-community classroom in this region. Enrollment for the class was fairly stable; twenty-nine pupils remained in class throughout the year; seven pupils moved away during the year; while eight pupils entered class during

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the school year. The school was consolidated; approximately half of the pupils commuted daily on school buses while the other pupils lived in the community within walking distance of the schoolhouse. Six pupils came from homes of professional parents whose social and economic status in the community was high; three children were from homes supported by public welfare. Chronological ages in September ranged from 7-0 to 9-5. Intellectually, as shown by results from the Kuhlmann-Anderson Group Intelligence Test, the I.Q.'s ranged from 67 to 115 with a median score of 102. Achievement in reading comprehension as obtained from the Van Wagenen Reading Test for Grade III ranged from ten pupils who scored primer level to three pupils who scored 4.5 with a median score of 2.2.

The classroom was old and small. Furniture consisted of 35 screwed-down desks in various stages of repair. An open bookcase, shelves under the windows, a crude table, a teacher's desk, and eight assorted chairs salvaged from the basement completed the furnishings. Although there were eight large windows, one ceiling bulb was the sole help for artificial illumination on cloudy days. There was barely a passageway between the rows of desks and the four walls.

An inventory of the available reading materials prior to the opening of school revealed the usual dearth. There was no central library for the school, although there was a community library which could be used by town pupils. Approximately forty library books in various conditions of repair and of assorted merit and difficulty were found in the classroom bookcase. The stock of work-type reading materials on hand included forty copies of *Busy World*;¹ twenty-six copies of *Neighbors Near and Far*;² twelve copies of *Under the Sun*;³

¹ Quinlan, Myrtle B., *Busy World*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1940.

² Wahlert, Jennie and Hahn, Julia, *Neighbors Near and Far*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1935.

³ Crabtree, E. K., Walker, L. V. C., Canfield, D., *Under the Sun*, The University Publishing Co., Lincoln, Nebraska, 1941.

twelve copies of *Let's Take Turns*;⁴ and some copies of old third grade reading textbooks.

Upon request, the parish superintendent supplied two ten-copy sets of second-grade readers (*Faces and Places*⁵ and *We Grow Up*⁶) and two ten-copy sets of third-grade readers (*Wide Wings*⁷ and *More Streets and Roads*⁸). Obviously, from surveying the available materials, it would be necessary to resort to borrowing first-grade books from other teachers and to soliciting financial assistance from parents in order to have sufficient and appropriate materials for carrying on an individualized reading program.

The Procedure

Children of this particular class had never been accustomed to a flexible grouping-within-the-class procedure. The first week of the school session was required for administering standardized tests in order to determine the initial grouping. After observing the pupils for a week, discussing their needs with the teacher of the year before, and studying the results of the standardized test, it was deemed wise to start with three groups. The ten pupils who scored primer level comprised the first group and read from a first-grade reader. Thirteen pupils who scored first-and second-grade levels were provided with a second-grade reader and made up the second group. The third group used a third-grade reader and was composed of the ten pupils who scored third-grade level or above. After one day of work there was evidence of the fact that a few pupils were not placed in the group which could best serve their needs. Ac-

⁴Nemec, L. G., *Let's Take Turns*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1940.

⁵Quinlan, M. B., *Faces and Places*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1940.

⁶Gates, A. I., Huber, M. B., and Peardon, C. C., *We Grow Up*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1939.

⁷Gates, A. I., Huber, M. B., and Peardon, C. C., *Wide Wings*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1939.

⁸Gray, W. S. and Arbuthnot, M. H., *More Streets and Roads*, Scott, Foresman and Co., Chicago, 1942.

cordingly, two girls who had been placed in the first group were allowed to take their books home to finish the stories and were asked to read with the second group. During the second week of school, a new pupil entered the class. After demonstrating individually that he could read from the third-grade reading textbook, he was placed in the third group. Several other adjustments were made in the groups during the first six weeks of the school term. By the close of the first six weeks, there were three major groups and one small one composed of three pupils who still needed much help in word recognition and who needed to continue reading very easy material.

Administration of the reading groups in this classroom was difficult. Since there were screwed-down desks, few chairs, and little space, it was found best to give preliminary instructions, directions, and guide questions to all pupils as they sat at their regular desks, and then to have all pupils for a particular study group to move to an indicated section of the classroom. Although a flexible principle for grouping was observed, there were usually three basic reading groups in progress simultaneously. In this classroom, it was found impracticable to attempt more than four groups at any time.

Directions, motive questions, and words for group study were placed on the blackboard before the pupils assembled at one o'clock. Two groups worked independently while the teacher devoted her major attention to the other group. At a point where the group receiving major attention needed to work specifically on an assigned problem, the teacher was free to turn to either of the other groups. From day to day, the teacher would devote her major instructional attention to that group which most needed teacher direction and help.

Varied teaching techniques and policies were employed as the work of the year proceeded. Occasionally the advanced group would look up necessary words for the reading class in

a simplified dictionary or glossary, while the teacher provided word-analysis help, motivation, or a cooperative study problem for another group. At certain times, members of a group would read from supplementary pamphlets (by Nila B. Smith from Silver Burdett, or Arthur I. Gates from Macmillan) pertaining to the topic studied the previous day. From time to time, the weakest group would be given a word-recognition exercise for review or for preparatory purposes while the teacher first devoted her attention to the accelerated group. At other times, one group would be prepared at the close of a period for the reading of a particular selection and assignment on the following day.

Daily individual comprehension checks were provided. These were made possible through the use of blackboard directions, study helps found in the reading textbooks and manuals, or especially prepared ditto copies made by the teacher. These comprehension tests were found especially helpful in providing for individual as well as common group needs. Daily checks also served the motivating purpose of providing evidence of individual accomplishment and individual growth. Use of the daily comprehension checks provided for better guidance in reading for a purpose, organization of material read, practice in recall and pupil summarization, and in rereading for the correction of errors.

Flexibility of grouping was recognized as desirable and was practiced so far as seemed possible. As children with common needs worked together, evidence of new needs appeared. When sufficient individual progress was shown, a pupil was moved to another group where his needs might better be served. Uncompleted books, due to transfer in grouping, were read at home or during the library period. Group rigidities were occasionally broken by planning for the oral reading of a favorite story to the entire class. One day each week was reserved for

the entire class to read and discuss *My Weekly Reader*. Occasionally a test from the newspaper provided the nucleus for a special study group on the following day. From time to time, simpler editions of papers which treated of the same general topic were prepared for the three most deficient readers. Sometimes more advanced news magazines or background articles which treated of the topic presented in *My Weekly Reader* were provided for the advanced readers. Other temporary groups were formed in order to provide needed help in special problems such as, correct use of the table of contents, simple organization, how to syllabicate, how to formulate desirable answers in complete sentences, and other problems.

Six individuals received special individual help intermittently throughout the school year. The lunch hour was the only time available for such work. Therefore, it was imperative that the work periods be kept brief and that the work be kept on an optional basis. Since the lunch hour was an hour and fifteen minutes in length, it was felt that voluntary work for fifteen minutes imposed no physical hardship on pupils. One pupil was dismissed early in order to have time to go home and return for a fifteen-minute reading period.

In order to provide a typical classroom experience, the author determined that she should carry on the entire reading situation alone and not resort to the temptation of securing help from the regular classroom teacher.

Pupil Progress

In spite of numerous difficulties in a classroom situation that was far from ideal, it was possible to carry out a procedure of differentiated instruction. In the main, there was more than a year's growth in reading. One pupil showed no gain in reading; under a year's growth was made by four pupils; while twenty-one pupils made more than a year's growth in reading.

As shown by a different form of the Van Wagenen Reading Test for Grade III administered in May, the class range extended from one pupil who scored primer level to one pupil who scored 6.5 with a median score of 3.8.

Spontaneous verbatim comments from a few pupils indicate to some extent the opinions and feelings of the children for such a program. From a pupil in the lowest group after having received commendable comments on his paper, although he was reading from a first-grade reader: "This is the first time I've ever been able to get much out of reading." From a pupil in the average group: "This is the first year I have ever liked reading." From the pupil who made the most growth during the year and who was moved to the superior group during the latter part of the year: "I didn't know reading could be so much fun. I never really tried to read before. I just used to make up part of the story from the pictures." From the pupil who scored the highest on the September test: "I like to read this way because now I don't have to wait so much in reading class. It seems like you can just go along and get what you want from reading."

Understanding the Teacher's Problems

In reflection on the year's work, certain outstanding difficulties provided the author with a realistic understanding of the problems encountered by a classroom teacher in attempting to carry out an individualized program of instruction in reading.

First, there was the paramount problem of limited time. It was practically impossible to provide needed individual instruction for six pupils who would have especially profited from it. Due to the pressure of time, the motivating questions set for groups were often rushed. Too frequently, group discussions were cut short. There seemed too little time to help "Johnnie" recall the words he had struggled with yesterday.

As new pupils entered the class, there was too little time to observe them carefully in order to determine their needs, and to provide the special help they needed.

Then, there was the out-of-class time element for the teacher. Planning work for three groups, preparing comprehension tests, writing notes to parents in quest of materials, arranging with other teachers for exchanges of books, preparing special materials for certain pupils to use in relation to a class topic, preparing materials for informational classes, and helping individual pupils, meant that the teacher had little time for other necessary responsibilities. Group teaching within a class means the making of several rather than one preparation for the work-type reading class. When could time be found for contacting parents? Yet, occasional notes to parents, telephone calls, and teacher-parent conferences are essential for a successful differentiated reading program.

Second, the author was impressed with the difficulty of guiding pupils to use reading as a basis for reasoning and inferential thinking. The textbook exercises and manual guides provided far more help in factual recall than they did in guiding reasoning. Frankly, the author felt she had neglected comprehension checks that stimulated real thought. This, then, should be one phase of teaching reading where prospective and in-service teachers should receive especial assistance. It is easy to admonish prospective teachers to emphasize reading in relation to thought; it is not so easy to practice the admonition.

Third, the paucity of reading materials presented a problem of considerable magnitude. For a unit taught by the classroom teacher on the local community, ten different articles of varying conceptual and structural difficulty were prepared for class use. But how many classroom teachers have the time, secretarial help, ability, or inclination to prepare such material?

The limited number of easy reading textbooks in broken sets necessitated exchanging books with other teachers in the school, community, and parish. Borrowing, arranging for exchanges of books, and even resorting to the practice of buying a few needed books consumed teacher time, money, and energy.

The dearth of materials for pleasure reading also presented a problem. This was partially met by requesting a fee of fifty cents from each pupil. Use was made of the community library, one church library, and private collections of books from some of the pupils. The problem of all types of reading material, however, remained crucial throughout the year.

Fourth, the dire need of space and general equipment cannot be overlooked. There was insufficient space for a group circle even if the pupils were seated on the floor. If a group wished to discuss some special topic or to read orally for some purpose, use was made of the small cloakroom, a corner of the much-used auditorium, or the spacious and well-lighted corridor.

The Conclusion

As the year proceeded, the author became convinced that she must render a twofold service to students preparing to teach. As before, students must learn of the basic problem of individual differences; they must read and observe and learn of the best known theory and practice in providing for the individual reading needs of pupils. In addition, prospective teachers should visit and be forewarned of the types of teaching situations they will find. Strong emphasis should be placed on ways and means of carrying on an effective differentiated program of instruction in spite of usual obstacles.

If supervisors, administrators, consultants, and specialists desire actually to understand and appreciate the usual classroom teacher's problems, they should return to the classroom

(Continued on page 118)

Research in Language

LOU LABRANT¹

RURAL AMERICA has long enjoyed a "party-game," called Gossip. As perhaps you know, the company is seated in a circle and one person chosen as starter. This individual whispers to his right-hand neighbor some sentence made up at the moment; the neighbor in turn hurriedly whispers the words he thinks he heard to a third person on the right; and so on till finally the circle is completely informed and the starter hears his message again. The fun, of course, consists in comparing the original sentence with the distortion which results from the whispered communication. The game serves a fair analogy to what happens in the field of language research. Indeed, even the absurd conclusion is sometimes not far from what happens in the educational world. Note an illustration.

Perhaps twenty years ago psychologists, intent on devising tests of mental ability and of vocabulary size, discovered that the two kinds of tests resulted in similar ratings for those tested. This was to be expected, in part because mental tests draw heavily on a knowledge of words, and in part because a person learns words as he meets and needs them, and consequently his vocabulary is a symptom of his ability to learn from his environment. Half-understood whisperings about this relation—correlation if you prefer—led many schools to an intensive teaching of miscellaneous words, this teaching of vocabulary being based on the notion that a large vocabulary thus gained would indicate intelligence and consequent success in vocations. Note that the interpretation of the research was thus reversed. The *studies* had pointed to vocabulary growth as *symptomatic* of general mental growth; the *procedure* treated vocabulary increase as a

¹School of Education, New York University. This paper was presented at the Atlantic City meeting of the National Council, Nov. 30, 1946.

source of mental strength or I.Q. The game of Gossip had been all too closely followed.

The Educational Lag

A brief consideration will indicate reasons for the considerable gap between the research currently available and the utilization of that research in school programs and methods. It frequently happens that a psychological study of language is, upon completion, published in one of the numerous psychological journals. If the study is extensive, it may find its way into a specialized monograph series. These publications are relatively unfamiliar to all but a limited group of psychologists, for even among this group the journals and fields of specialization are numerous. Eventually, it is probable, the particular study will, in company with others in its area, find its way into a summary of a more general nature. This summary may, in turn, be used by a writer who is preparing a text in general psychology, although by this time the space and emphasis on any one piece of research is likely to be rather small. Other steps are, however, still ahead. The general psychology will in turn be translated into educational psychology, where it is likely to meet the attention of prospective teachers or those doing advanced study. By this time, however, the part played by our investigation of some language phenomenon has become slight indeed, included as it is likely to be in a book which must cover theories of learning, superficial discussion of the various forms of rationalization, something perhaps of tests and measurements, and the psychology of the various areas of the curriculum. Eventually some teacher of English about to make a textbook may discover this diluted and abbreviated indication that new aspects of language behavior have been discovered.

The foregoing comes about because research in the nature of language is not ordinarily carried on by those who teach language, but rather by specialists in general psychology.

Teachers tend, as an examination of the literature will clearly indicate, to experiment with methods of teaching, devices if you will, for inculcating certain habits or presenting effectively certain facts about language. They may, for example, wish to habituate children to the spelling of the possessive pronoun, to use of *him* or *me* after a preposition, or to teach that in certain sentences one chooses between the use of a comma and a semi-colon. It is not with such experimentation that this paper is concerned.

The Abundance of Language Studies

During the last fifty years many scholars have investigated the role of language in human life, and the range of their studies is large. We find such work chiefly in the fields of psychology, anthropology, sociology, and philosophy. In psychology large contributions have been made in the psychoanalytic field. Study of infant language has also thrown light on adult behavior, and given new understanding of the delicacy requisite for dealing with language behavior. Investigations of the range and depth of vocabulary have negated many assumptions formerly held concerning the number and meanings of the words we use. Tests of association and of emotional reaction have indicated the involved nature of language in each of us. Anthropologists in their studies of primitive languages have discovered new patterns for sentences, methods of communication which show by contrast the effect on thought of the subject-predicate structure of the Indo-Germanic tongues. Finally there is the increasing body of information about the growth and structure of the English language itself, a field in which most high school and elementary school teachers of English have very little training.

It is not strange, in view of the extensive literature on language, that the teacher tends to fall back upon the textbook as authority, unmindful of the fact that the writer of the text

may himself be ignorant of the basis for his study. An illustration may emphasize this point.

In an effort to bring more closely to the teacher some of the important findings in the field of the growth and structure of the English language itself, the National Council of Teachers of English some years ago undertook preparation of what has now become a series of studies or monographs. These books were designed as elementary steps for the teacher who wished to prepare a text, or to judge the accuracy of one. Despite the importance of these books, they are not widely known, even by Council members. I have for some years taught courses on the teaching of English, and have included in these courses in various summer schools the analysis of the locally adopted texts in terms of these research studies. It is unnecessary to tell you that in almost every instance the texts were presenting usage and grammatical rules at variance in many ways with the findings of research as presented in the Council publications. Students in grammar and high schools were being asked to discard and change locutions considered acceptable and established by outstanding authorities. Significant lines of language development were being ignored. Many teachers were blithely accepting as correct whatever they found in texts, often questioned by students who were themselves more alert to changes than the teachers and texts themselves.

Two Great Needs Today

Obviously in a twenty-minute paper it is absurd to attempt any summary of the literature on either the role of language in the individual or the changing nature of English itself. It may, however, be possible to point to some lines where literature is available, and where we are in need of interpretations. I believe that the Council should make two efforts. First, the Council should work with experts in the various fields where language study is being carried on, and publish a series of in-

terpretations or monographs for the class-room teacher who needs information but does not have the time nor the necessary background to read the many basic studies. Second, the Council should undertake some sort of promotion program which will guarantee that text-book makers, teachers, supervisors, and school superintendents know that such materials are not only available, but that their study is imperative. Among our own membership the studies already published are sadly neglected; our Council membership plus non-member readers of this magazine today include only a very small percentage of the teachers of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the United States.

Language as one aspect of growth: There is a large and growing literature, practically unanimous in indicating the close relation of language to other forms of growth. Studies of the language of the pre-school child indicate also an extremely large range in the ages at which children speak their first words, make their first two-word sentences, begin the use of pronouns, use dependent clauses, and become social rather than dominantly egocentric in their talking. Gessell and Ilg² in discussing the two-year old make the following statement, which illustrates this irregular development:

The whole linguistic apparatus, mouth, lips, tongue, larynx and thorax, is undergoing rapid organization. Jargon is dropping out, sentences are coming in. Soliloquy is taking the place of the babbling of the 6 months old child, as though on an advanced level the 2 year old is under a similar compulsion to exercise his vocal abilities, to repeat words, to name things, to suit words to action and action to words. Vocabularies vary enormously in size from a half dozen to a thousand words, but the third year is ordinarily the year when words burgeon.

² Arnold Gesell and Frances L. Ilg, *Infant and Child in the Culture of Today*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943, Pages 160-61.

Despite similar statements, based on hundreds of studies, we continue to teach all children to read at age six, to expect approximately equal progress and interest in writing from all children entering the public schools. We have also, in most schools, failed to utilize what students of young children know about the relation of sensory experience to acquisition and use of words related to that experience.

Language and mental health: Psychiatrists have much to teach us concerning the relation of verbalism to personality and mental health. Sanford in a recent paper³ summarizes more than a hundred books and studies dealing with speech and personality. He states (page 839):

An empirical psychology of language is coming into existence. One branch of this development is the problem and the fact of a relation between linguistic behavior and personal adjustment. There are many indications that language is a vehicle of personality as well as of thought, for when the person speaks, he tells us not only about the world, but also, through both form and content, about himself.

Despite such statements we continue in many—probably the great majority—of schools to treat language as though the form were not an indication of the personality, and as though the form which the expression should take could be determined by some objective, external pattern. It is highly possible that the antagonism and frustration of many students in composition classes stems from the fact that a personal expression has been changed or treated impersonally. There is need to explore this entire literature, and to learn the points at which we have information and those where we should move cautiously until further knowledge is available.

³ Fillmore H. Sanford, "Speech and Personality," *Psychol. Bull.*, December, 1942, Pages 811-45.

It would be well for the National Council to enlist the services of competent psychologists to develop guiding principles for approaching the writing and speech of our pupils. An illustration of a critical field is the correction of the speech of children who learn unapproved usage or dialects in their homes. Obviously it takes as much intelligence to learn to say "I done" as "I did"; which is learned depends upon which is heard. In both events the learning is attached to family experience, criticism therefore involving implied criticism of this experience. In a civilization such as ours, with rapidly changing social levels, this problem is a frequent one in our schools.

Frustrations or other maladjustments are frequently revealed in writing. A boy wrote stories in each of which he or some other boy overcame a giant, a policeman, a teacher, or a pompous adult. Characterizing the stories as silly or repetitive was certainly not a sound procedure. Similar illustrations could be multiplied indefinitely. There is literature dealing with such symbolism, but it has not as yet been translated into any guide or warning to teachers.

Structure and Growth of Individual's Language: A limited literature exists concerning the relation of sentence structure to mental and chronological growth. Despite this, courses of study continue to be built on the errors or violations of adult structure rather than on the general development to be expected at a given age. In other words, little emphasis is given to evidence that, given time instead of instruction, many variations from the adult pattern will work themselves out through experience. Related to this are abundant data, derived from scores on the Stanford Revision of the Binet-Simon Scale, which indicate the general level of abstract thinking to be expected at various age levels. Our teaching of abstractions about language needs comparison to these data.

Vocabulary Studies: Vocabulary studies need to be brought

to the attention of teachers. As was pointed out earlier in this paper, many have completely misinterpreted the findings concerning vocabulary increase and general intelligence (if there is such a general quality). Probably in no area are old wives' tales more generally believed. We still have teachers of English who think the average man gets along with less than a thousand words, and believes that twenty thousand words which Shakespeare used in his plays is a remarkably high total. I have called attention to some of the outstanding studies in this field elsewhere. The enormous body of data deserves a careful summary for teachers of English, with discussion of the implications.

Growth and Structure of the English Language: As was pointed out previously, research on the language itself is important to the teaching of English. In this field we have, fortunately, an available interpretative literature. Unfortunately it is unfamiliar to many teachers. The questions on usage and grammar sent monthly to *The English Journal* indicate in far too many cases a lack of understanding which might be gained merely from reading the monographs of the Council listed earlier in this paper. Recent books which would do much for teachers of English are *The Gift of Tongues* by Margaret Schlauch and *The Loom of Language* by Frederick Bodmer. Both relate English structure to the structures of other languages, and discuss development. The 250 pages of Otto Jespersen's *Growth and Structure of the English Language* first copyrighted in this country in 1923, have enough matter in their scholarly pages to revolutionize our teaching of grammar. It is of course futile to attempt naming all of the important books on English grammar. That they are in contradiction to much that is currently taught in American high schools is not to our credit as students of our field.

Philosophy of Language: There is a growing and important literature, in part based on research and in part philosophy,

which considers language in relation to current theories in mathematics and science, to the findings of psychology and anthropology, and to a resulting philosophy of life. There is an exciting and terrifying literature based on studies of the role being played by mass methods of expression (radio, motion pictures, book club selections, reprints in huge editions of great and lesser books). Certain sociologists are likewise studying and reporting on the changing place English as a language is playing in international affairs. These are profitable lines of study and of research, but have not been considered the province of this paper.

Conclusion

Most thinking persons agree that the existence of civilized man is threatened today. While language is not food or drink, and will not satisfy the hungry and thirsty, it is the medium by which we must do much of our learning and planning, and by which we must think out solutions to our problems if we are not to solve them by the direct method of force. No sensible person believes that language will cure all difficulties; but the thoughtful person will certainly agree that language is a highly important factor in promoting understanding, and a most dangerous factor in promoting misunderstanding between individuals and between the countries individuals represent. Moreover, language is a significant factor in the psychological adjustment of the individual. This is not the time for the teacher of any language to follow the line of least resistance, to teach without the fullest possible knowledge of the implications of his medium. Before we, either as individuals or as a Council, experiment with methods of doing specific things or block out a curriculum, let us spend some time with the best scholars in the various fields of language study to discover what they know, what they believe uncertain and in need of study. Let us go to the best sources, and study the answers thoughtfully. The game of Gossip is not for us.

Back to Magic Carpets

NELLIE Z. THOMPSON¹

MUCH HAS been written about the effect of literature upon individual morals. An increasing amount is being written about the effect of literature upon intercultural relations. The danger of stereotypes and invalid generalizations has been recognized. The embroidery of the past has been questioned. Modern realistic treatment has been buffeted. The value of books that are avenues of escape from a turbulent personal or international world has been discussed. On one hand writers pray, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight," while on the other hand authors seem to worship at the altar of Bagatelle.

There have been volumes too, concerning the trends in children's literature. The children's books of the present day merit no disparagement, but where are those delightful imaginative works that once read are a joy forever? Books of fantasy the past few years have been only ostensibly for children. Modern children, satiated with simplified tales of a mechanical age, look upon universally loved fairy tales and myths with disdain. It is true, it must be conceded, that material about people of other lands, of animals, and of machines is interesting and carefully written from the child's angle in the child's vocabulary. Neither can it be criticized adversely from the standpoint of affecting character or understanding of the world around the child.

It may be contended that, commendable as the change may be and learned as the discussions of literature and its influence on human relationships may be, the crux of the matter has been unobserved or by-passed.

¹ Editorial staff, *Student Life*.

Let it be granted that any written material calls up images and that much of it plays upon the sympathy of the reader. Modern productions, with their predominant note of realism, do not call forth and develop sheer imaginative power. Students can identify themselves with characters, yes. They can even project themselves into literary situations and experience the thoughts and emotions of people somewhat like themselves.

But no longer do children exult in animals that talk, elves in the stable on Christmas Eve, the sun as a golden chariot drawn by fiery horses, the awakening of Sleeping Beauty, or the career of Rumpelstiltskin. Would not a stretch of the imagination in perusing such ageless creations lay a foundation for a more penetrating insight into fellow-man? Is not the inventive mind to which may be credited the scientific progress of the world an imaginative mind? Is the artist's mind earth-bound? Have not those who best understood spiritual things been men of keen imagination?

A world of prosaic minds cannot hope for inventive progress, religious faith, or genuine human sympathy and understanding. An unimaginative mind is too calloused to feel the pain of the hungry, the anguish of the homeless, the fervor of a foreign patriot, the joy of artistic creation, the comfort of deep holy faith, or the plight of the downtrodden minorities. The malaise of our world may well be relieved by deliberate and widespread attention to the encouragement of youthful flights of imagination.

Children and Motion Pictures

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT*

THE COMMERCIAL moving picture, like the radio, offers a wide choice of subject matter, good, bad, and indifferent, but with this distinction: moving pictures are more real, more stirring, more convincing than any other vicarious experience to which a child is exposed. In the comic strip, "Blondie" is an amusing imaginary character, but when Blondie speaks over the radio, she takes on substance; she has a voice, a particular voice. She is, therefore, a real person. Then, when Blondie in the moving pictures is both seen and heard, calls her little boy, even as a child's mother calls him, wears perky clothes, has a modern "hairdo" and a comical smile, then Blondie is indeed real, a standard by which the child may judge his own mother. As one little girl said, "I do like mothers to be young, don't you?" It is this quality of reality about the moving pictures which makes their influence so potent that people protest a salacious film, and decry all "movies" because of the effect of the undesirable ones. It is perhaps worthwhile for us to evaluate briefly this most conspicuous rival of reading, if only to know with what interests books are competing.

Westerns—Children—boys particularly—are eager for action and they get far too little of it in our big cities. The *Westerns* satisfy their hunger for action that is wild, dangerous, triumphant, and male. No sickish kissing scenes in these cowboy tales! In fact, the hard-riding heroes of *Westerns* are strictly forbidden by their circumspect juvenile followers to kiss, or do anything much in the way of love-making. A girl, in these *Westerns*, is merely a cause, or a remote reward, as impersonal as the Princess on the Glasshill. Gene Autry and Roy Rogers

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are the epitome of masculine vigor and skill, with little time for women. They fight for the right, force villains to come clean, save the "gurrul" from "worse than death," and fade out, nonchalantly cleaning their six-shooters, ready for the next "on-the-hip draw." Children find such pictures soul-satisfying and they rarely harm young movie-goers beyond splitting their ear-drums with the lusty din of battle.

Crime—Westerns continue with unabated popularity, but the juvenile hunger for exciting action has been met by less innocuous fare. The movie of crime has come into being. First we had gangsters who fought, bled, sneered, and got away with it. If justice caught up with them in the end, it was administered with as light a touch as romance with the cowboys. Usually the gruesome thugs were left still sneering murderously with justice merely hinted at. Meanwhile they had made fools of policemen, detectives, and the law in general. Children could follow all the fascinating details of how they committed their crimes, and their superior wit and ruthlessness were well glamorized.¹

Public opinion finally protested these films, long and loudly, so the G-Man was hastily substituted for the handsome gangster. But turning the criminal into the hunted sometimes roused even more sympathy for him, and his demise was accomplished with considerable sentimental woe. In short, children who are moving picture gangster or G-Men followers are just as likely to identify themselves with the clever crook as with the righteous arm of the law. In both varieties of pictures crime holds the center of the stage, consumes the bulk of the action, and justice is decidedly briefed. Perhaps this is the way it is in real life, but the effect of crime heroes on children is certainly something to think about.

Horrors—Monsters and pictures of horror continue to be

¹ Dale, Edgar. *The Content of Motion Pictures*. New York, Macmillan, 1935. Ch. VIII.

popular in spite of Mr. Forman's report on *Our Movie-Made Children*² published as early as 1933. Children continue to shriek and women to faint, but Boris Karloff and other horror stars prosper. Mr. Forman reports that "The Phantom of the Opera," "The Gorilla," "The Lost World," and their like were witnessed by children who chewed their fingers and bit their nails until they bled, and were haunted by dreams of terror for many nights afterward.³ Children taken to see the latest hair-raisers are still biting their nails, shrieking, diving under the seats, or running out of the theater to escape these excruciating pictures. Still adults drag them to see these films, children too young to protect themselves, and with no outlet for the violent terrors roused by such scenes.

Torrid love—Much has been written about the damaging effect of the too realistic and vehement love scenes upon adolescents.⁴ Our cities may be splashed with huge posters of one of the current "great lovers" bending a sultry beauty over backwards, and planting a scorcher on her enormous lips. Beneath will be some delicate slogan such as, "He's burning with yearning." Can't you just see all the love-curious, intellectually under-equipped youngsters hurrying to the theater eager to watch the latest techniques in loving and obtain, in the process, the maximum thrills?⁵ Watching avidly these sexy dramas has become one of the major spectator sports of modern youth, and there is considerable evidence to show that, physically roused by such scenes, thoroughly instructed as to what goes on and why, equipped with vivid memories of love-making techniques, youth has gone out to experiment on his own.⁶ Perhaps the juveniles who acknowledge the part played by such

²Forman, Henry James. *Our Movie Made Children*. Macmillan, 1933.

³*Ibid*, Chapter 7.

⁴Dale, Edgar. *Motion Pictures and Youth*. Chapters VI and VII.

⁵Forman, Henry James. *Our Movie Made Children*. Chapter XIII.

⁶Fleeze, Brother Urban H. "Movies As An Influence in the Life of the Modern Adolescent." *The Catholic Educational Review*, June, 1945.

films in contributing to their delinquency were already over the edge, but certainly salacious films, and there are a lot of them, do nothing to provide wholesome or even normal ideas of sex relationships for either youth or adults.

Family life—On the credit side of ledger, moving pictures have made delightful pictures of family life. The *Andy Hardy* series has been enormously popular with movie-goers of all ages. *Little Women*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *Our Vines Have Tender Grapes*, *Since You Went Away*, *The State Fair*, *National Velvet* and dozens of others have revealed the everyday ups and downs, the friction, the misunderstandings, but also the intense love and loyalty of normal family relationships. These have been popular pictures too, and should be remembered to balance the ledger.

Musicals, comedies, and cartoons—For the most part the musical shows and comedies of the films are lighthearted and harmless. The former are gorgeously costumed and memorable only as passing spectacles of dazzling beauty, moving rhythmically to pretty melodies. These offer a fairy tale release from the here and now, and are as easy to take as ice cream. The slap-stick comedies range from the rough and tumble of the Grouchos and their kind to the once subtle and beautiful pantomime of Charlie Chaplin in the days of his greatness. There seems to be a dearth of such comedies just now, usurped by the animated cartoons which perhaps replaced them in the children's favor. "Donald Duck" is only one of a whole gallery of animal funnies which have come to life on the screen, and are invariably greeted with cheers by the small fry. "Popeye the Sailor" is another favorite. These animated cartoons with their fantastic plots, farcical situations, slap-stick humor, and genuinely amusing drawings, are certainly the favorite comic fare of the child of today and are mostly harmless entertainment.

Travel, science, and news—The radio news commentator comes to life on the screen, and his voice accompanies a swiftly moving panorama of world events with a timeliness which still seems miraculous. Children find their geography unfolding before their eyes. Science, news, history, geography—the whole world is spread dramatically before them, without their having to turn a page or read a word. The commentators do it all. Plants unfold in magnified form. The story of the life of a bee, an ant, or an elephant is ours for the looking, and we know undersea life almost as well as we know Main Street. Horrors are also present—gory accidents, hangings and all the devastation and brutalities of war. What effect have these on children? We do not know. We can only hope their terror is blotted out by the science and travel pictures which are beautiful both to children and adults.

Biography—Great people in various fields have been badly and superbly done by the moving pictures. *Henry VIII*, *Rembrandt*, *Disraeli*, *The Rothschilds*, *Jean Lafitte*—*The Buccaneer*, *Abraham Lincoln* were magnificently recreated. *Chopin* was badly mangled, and while the story of the Curies was good as far as it went, there was not enough; the picture did not quite come to grips with reality, and the conclusion was scandalously Hollywood. Nevertheless, that film sent many people to the biography of *Marie Curie*, people who would not otherwise have read it. The lives of Chopin and Gershwin were absurdly falsified, but the residue of truth which remained and the glorious music somehow or other made those men and their achievements enthrallingly real. Biography is a rich field, and even when the films do not quite give the true stature of the man, they recreate something of him, and give youngsters a feeling for greatness which many of them are never going to catch from the limited reading they are capable of doing. We should be genuinely grateful for the moving picture produc-

tions in this field, and encourage children to see the best of them.

Animal stories—Animal acts on the screen began as an extension of the animal acts of vaudeville. Elaborately costumed dogs played brief comedies. Dog trainers put their troupes through hoops, up ladders, and over hurdles. It was all very artificial and painful. Then came the great *Rin-Tin-Tin* pictures, in which a fine dog played a dog's part in relation to human beings. There was plot, suspense, sorrow, and usually a heart-filling conclusion with the long suffering dog secure and contented. Since then, dog and horse pictures have remained continuously popular with children. *Lassie Come Home*, *Son of Lassie*, *My Friend Flicka*, *Thunderhead*, *National Velvet*, are not only loved in the films, but apparently unable to get enough of these four-legged heroes in the pictures, the youngsters betake themselves to the libraries demanding the books.

In early movies, some dreadful things were done to animals who trusted the conscienceless humans with whom they worked. Horses were run at breakneck speed and jumped off cliffs to die in agony. They were tripped by concealed wires to bring about dramatic falls, usually resulting in broken legs and death. Some publicity has been given to such practices,⁷ but not enough. We were interested when an eight-year-old dog lover told us he would not go to see a certain animal picture because that film had not been made with S.P.C.A.⁸ supervision or approval; whereas, *Thunderhead*, he informed us, was filmed with the S.P.C.A. right on location. We only wish the general public were as well informed as this boy, and as firm in their boycotting of films where there is any doubt about the treatment of the animals.

⁷ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. "The American Weekly." Sunday, October 14, 1945. "Kindness Secret of Better Animal Actors," by Roy Rogers.

⁸ Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Books filmed—These animal tales are only a few examples of the filming of fine books, many of which have been done with rare excellence. Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with the Mendelssohn music had a breath-taking beauty which was unforgettable. Seeing it with an audience that was three-fourths children was something to remember. They cheered their favorite Mickey Rooney as Puck every time he appeared, they laughed raucously at the comedy, they were spellbound into silence by the flight of the fairies, up and up, circling the moon. Finally, when it was all over, most of them remained to see it again. Few reviewers of this remarkable film seem to have sensed its significance as a purveyor to remote places of the spoken, visualized Shakespeare. This fairy drama, the tragic romance of *Romeo and Juliet* and the heroics of *Henry V* brought to the young people of our small towns and cities their only opportunities to hear Shakespeare professionally played. In spite of some cutting of the text, these were moving productions, and gave not only Shakespeare's language, but a recreation of picturesque and fantastic scenes in a way the stage can never do. Who, seeing those films, will ever forget Oberon, the fairies, or Juliet's birthday ball, or her cortegé winding down the steep, gloomy road to the tomb? The rapier-like words of Tybalt, Mercutio's Queen Mab speech, Henry's great lines on the eve of the battle of Agincourt are also gratefully remembered with the best of our stage productions. These films eventually bring Shakespeare to thousands of young people for thirty-five cents instead of three dollars. We need more such ventures both in the name of entertainment and literature. At least these we have had, should be revived biennially for the benefit of young people.

Fiction has also been well filmed. *David Copperfield* could hardly have been better, and constituted for many of our

young people their first, and perhaps only, contact with Charles Dickens. The same was true of Jane Austen's comedy of manners, *Pride and Prejudice*. In the moving pictures, *Little Lord Fauntleroy* was a great improvement over the book, as the outraged protests of the boys, who tried to read it, testified. *Tom Sawyer* has been well filmed, *Peter Pan* was entrancing, and years and years ago there was an English, silent production of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which was sheer perfection. The moving picture version of *Little Women* is one of our American masterpieces. Why can't such films be kept on hand and revived every few years for each new crop of children? Young people and even children were so entranced with *Wuthering Heights* they saw it repeatedly and the book circulated continuously from most of our libraries. If the moving pictures can turn such books as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Wuthering Heights* into favorites with thousands of young people, why should not every city and sizeable town keep a collection of such films for regular revivals? *Heidi* ought to be remade by the movies. It was not too well done. *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates* would make a far better film than it is a book. *Robin Hood* and *Treasure Island* should always be available, and we wish the films would begin to produce some of the recent favorites in children's books. *Johnny Tremaine* cries out for a film version and so does *Lost Queen of Egypt*. *Caddie Woodlawn* would be good, and so would *Call It Courage*, *The Good Master*, and a composite of the Laura Ingalls Wilder series. We need such pictures because in every case of a successful film version of a book the children have gone scurrying to the libraries to get the source. Indeed one seven-year-old walked into the Cleveland Public Library and demanded *Anthony Adverse*.⁹ When it was gently hinted that he might not be able to read it, he said firmly, "Well, I read it in the movies and I want that book."

⁹Miss Margaret Clark, Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library.

Schools and Moving Pictures

Looking at the whole field, moving pictures give us, in addition to some dubious material, stories about family life in our own and other countries, entertaining stories of many kinds, biography, news, travel, science, comedies, musicals, cartoons, animal tales, filmed versions of books. To reject this rich offering because some pictures are half-baked, or salacious, or vicious, would be as stupid as to reject books for the same reasons. The business of homes and schools is to know the offering, and to give children some guidance in their choice of movies, just as we do in their choice of books. This we can do by talking casually about the good ones, or better still, by encouraging children to talk about them. Children are apt to be more influenced by the judgment of their peers than they are by adults who may sometimes seem to them both oppressive and obtuse. A child who can give the children a rousing account of a good movie sells that picture as no adult can. Of course the difficulty comes when that child wants to tell about some gangster, or horror picture. But we won't snub him then any more than we snub him when he brings in his favorite comic magazine. Instead we'll just say sympathetically, "I know that must have been a thriller, but have you seen *The Yearling* yet? You know, I'd rather wait and have you report that to us because I hear it is one of the big pictures of the year. We can't take the time for all the movies but you report them so well you always make us want to see them, so let's wait until you can tell us about *The Yearling*."

The National Council of Teachers of English

Teachers of English Take a Fresh Look

La Tourette Stockwell¹

Some seventeen hundred college, high-school, and elementary-school teachers of English assembled at Atlantic City, November 28-30, to consider "English for These Times." In contrast to the "over the river and through the woods" blizzard with which Minneapolis presented the NC TE convention last year, the deliberations at Atlantic City were attended by warm breezes and a friendly sun. It will be interesting to see what weather conditions San Francisco will produce for the 1947 meeting.

The first general session got under way Thanksgiving night. The visitors were greeted by Heber H. Ryan, assistant commissioner of education for New Jersey, and by Floyd C. Potter, superintendent of schools, Atlantic City. Dr. Helene W. Hartley, president of the NCTE, delivered an address which did in fact strike a keynote for the many discussions, both formal and informal, which took place on the two days following. Dr. Hartley prompted the convention

to think sharply about "some issues and implications" of "English for These Times."

The two other papers read at the Thanksgiving session continued the president's challenge to English instruction. Thus in his "Implications of Modern Linguistic Science" Professor Charles C. Fries declared that the new findings of linguistic science ought to be revolutionizing our attitude toward, and our methods of, teaching language at all age levels. Professor Theodore Morrison in his "It Is Earlier Than You Think" illustrated why "our times" do not have an entity of their own. He pointed out that literature has been partisan from Isaiah to the *Partisan Review*, that, although it is inescapably moral, it presents us not with moral unity but with moral variety. "Literature then," he maintains, "must be considered in its own character and in its entirety when we think of its place in education."

Some plans and proposals as to how these issues might be met were presented at the general session on Friday morning. Professor Porter G.

¹Assistant editor, *College English*.

Perrin, the Council's president-elect, discussed "Maximum Essentials in Composition"; Professor Harold A. Anderson spoke on "Critical Thinking Through Instruction in English"; and Professor Dora V. Smith gave a report for the Commission on the English Curriculum which was both a stimulating summary of the past year's findings and a call to help with the work which must be done.

Students will improve in critical thinking, Professor Anderson believes, if English teachers provide them with normal situations for genuine communication, if we give them a better understanding of language as a social institution and a psychological process, and if our instruction in grammar is radically reversed so as to develop inductively and thoroughly a few basic grammatical principles and to apply these in many ways in building effective sentences.

Dr. Smith, after explaining the organization of the committees of the Curriculum Commission, the members of which represent all sections of the country and every level of instruction from preschool through graduate school, analyzed the Commission's platform. Briefly, this states that our main problems are these: How can we attain continuity within the English program? How can we attain continuity of growth for the

individual? How can we integrate the language arts with all the situations in which pupils use language, at home, school, and in the community? How can we best relate the English curriculum to the adequate training of teachers? The urgent need, if the curriculum study is to be really fruitful, is, as Dr. Smith pointed out, for English groups throughout the country to carry on cooperative research in areas important to curriculum-making in English. Some of the studies which need to be made concern how young people grow in power to use language, the situations in which they use it, the skills and powers needed, the emotional and physical factors; what constitutes growth in power to participate in group discussion; the needs of children and adults in the area of listening. The Curriculum Commission needs your help in exploring these and many other aspects of English instruction!

Three luncheon meetings were held at noon on Friday. One was the open meeting of the Committee on Articulation to discuss continuity in language growth through the various levels of education; that of the National Association of Journalism Directors was for its own members and for teachers interested in school publications; the third for teachers and librarians interested in books



This photograph is reproduced from the menu for the Children's Book Luncheon at the Council convention in Atlantic City. The boys and girls are pupils in the Massachusetts Ave School, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

for children. At the books-for-children luncheon authors were guests, and Frances Clarke Sayers, superintendent of the work with children, New York Public Library, spoke. What Mrs. Sayers had to say about the need for children's books "which really say something" had implications for other than writers and readers of children's books. Mrs. Sayers is deeply concerned with the present danger of the spread of mass culture in the United States. She fears that the progress of our American culture, which has always drawn its strength from diversity and argument, is being halted by the process of mechanization. Factors which contribute to this are, for example, the big subscription lists of such magazines as *Life*, *Time*, and the *Reader's Digest*—so many people reading the same thing and letting their opinions be molded by the same influence. Similar is the mass effect upon our thinking of the book clubs, of radio programs, and of advertising. We are being subjected to mass stimuli and are being lulled into a mass reaction. Moreover—and here she flung her challenge at us—"teachers of English have contributed to this situation because they have taught English to serve other causes rather than for itself!" Morris Ernst's *The First Freedom* should be required reading for all of us.

The breadth and complexity of the convention topic was perhaps best indicated by the scope of the Friday afternoon conferences. In contrast to four section meetings of early Council conventions, there were this year seventeen simultaneous meetings. All of them, however, were focused upon "the response of the classroom and laboratory to the needs of English at this time." From among the fifty-odd papers read, and the ensuing discussions, several distinct tendencies in current thinking and practice emerged. These were a vigorous probing of the values of English as well as the values of education; more discriminating thinking as well as more amiable co-operation between teachers at different levels of instruction; a clearer perception of the need for the articulation of the English program at the various levels; a keener interest in American literature; a growing interest in world literature; and a very active interest in the better training of teachers at all levels and in particular aspects of English instruction.

The customary banquet was omitted this year, and from the conclusion of the Annual Business Meeting, which followed the seventeen conferences, until the evening interlude of music, poetry, and drama at eight, members had brief liberty to

enjoy with good conscience the soft salt winds, the moon over the Atlantic, and the browned-out fripperies of the Boardwalk. Many did and thought this temporary freeing of the mind from scheduled attentiveness had a tonic effect in preparing them for the evening's program and the directors' meeting afterward. Others missed the sociability and professional camaraderie of the banquet but recognized the democracy of making the Friday evening artistic program free so that *all* might enjoy it.

Probably everyone present would agree that some of the most stimulating moments of the Convention came Friday evening during the presentation of LaTouche Robinson's "Ballad for Americans" by the Atlantic City High School Glee Club and Orchestra. To teachers concerned with the revitalizing of our democratic heritage through effective teaching, there was a special poignancy in hearing and seeing such a buoyant group of young people give such artistic voice to the tenets of faith.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin and John Mason Brown, the speakers for this meeting, seemed for many reasons to be at the two extreme ends of the continuum which Dr. Hartley had described the night before. Coffin, with his walrus mustache, his

plump rotundity sheathed in black, and his meditative explication of "How a Poet Works," or at least how Coffin works, seemed to evoke the 1880's when life was less intense and a poet could preoccupy himself with the spring, the making of willow whistles, a boy and a plow, and a hound on the church doorstep. However, in his poetic reminders of the progress of the seasons, of the small truths of humanity, of simple contrasts in nature and in people, he quietly implied that, after all, there are still fixed stars in the universe as well as atom bombs.

John Mason Brown, on the other hand, spare, and tensely emotional, aptly described himself when he said that the gale of the modern world had carried him away. His topic was "Secing Things." He has seen much, in his army experiences around the globe, and in his travels since then, and he is deeply concerned about the apathy and ignorance of the people of this country concerning current events both at home and abroad. "Our minds," said he, "are the most unused muscles in this country." We are the only combatants of the war, he continued, who did not experience it at home, who have been asked to "imagine" war; and we don't seem to be equal to the job. But what can you expect of a society

where the radio broadcast of a "soap opera" in which the heroine is about to be killed off gets more letters from its hearers than any other program on the air? "The index of a nation's culture," said he, "the index of your success as teachers, is what its people do with their leisure." Judging by the reading and radio tastes of the average American, we still have a big job ahead of us. Some of the books Brown recommended as important to his hearers both as teachers and as citizens were: Ciano's *Diaries*, Orwell's *Animal Farm* ("Don't read it as a Republican!"), Butcher's *My Three Years with Eisenhower*, Elliott Roosevelt's *As He Saw It*, Lewis' *Myths after Lincoln* (not recent), Ann Petrie's *The Street*, Margaret Halsey's *Color Blind*, and Ferris Greenslet's *The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds*.

RADIO AWARD OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH MADE
AT THE SATURDAY LUNCHEON MEETING

BY MAX J. HERZBERG
Chairman, NCTE Radio Committee

Foreword

With the close of the war, there took place an obvious let-down in radio in the public attitude toward radio. The radio folks themselves, or some of them, seemed a little

wearied of well-doing. The radio audience (also some enlightened radio executives like CBS's William S. Paley) seemed somewhat restive as they listened to louder and longer commercials, constantly more unveracious soap operas, and the hundred thousandth repetition of the same wheezes and gags by the same weary and wearying comedians. It is by no means an accident that the past year has seen the sudden rise to fame of the first trenchant and realistic newspaper radio critic, John Crosby, of the *New York Tribune*, whose unsparing candor deserves an award in itself.

Fortunately, not all radio has collapsed. On the contrary, if you knew when and where to listen you could find as fine radio fare as ever in the programs of 1946. Since we are aware of this fact, it has been the endeavor of the National Council of Teachers of English, through its Radio Committee, to discover these programs and to say "well done" to the best of them. Last year we gave a single award for general excellence to CBS's "On a Note of Triumph," Norman Corwin's lyric drama to mark the close of the war. This year we sought to bring our awards into much closer alignment with our own activities in the classroom; and we therefore decided, with the approval

of the Executive Committee, to make a dual award, one to the program that most helpfully correlated with our work in teaching reading and writing, another to the program most helpfully correlated to speaking and listening. In the former field we found four programs of great excellence—the Theater Guild of the Air (ABC), the Pacific Story (NBC), the one-time performance of "Richard III" (CBS), and The Human Adventure (NBC). In the field of Speaking and Writing we found special commendation was due America's Town Meeting of the Air (ABC), the American Forum of the Air (NBC), the University of Chicago Round Table (NBC), and Transatlantic Call (CBS). We regretted that the rendition of John Hersey's "Hiroshima" (ABC) came too late to be considered for an award. By vote of the Radio Committee, two programs were selected for the Council Award.

America's Town Meeting of the Air (ABC)

Little need be said by way of exposition and description of that famous program, America's Meeting of the Air, a presentation of the American Broadcasting Company. For many years this series of discussions has played a prominent and invaluable role in keeping the Amer-

ican public fully informed regarding public issues and in emphasizing the all-important fact that all our problems have many aspects to be considered and evaluated. Here, in these weekly meetings on the air, one could see at its best the American approach toward difficulties and toward obstacles in our highly complicated political, social, and economical life. The approach stresses, first, the need for factual information; secondly, the importance of viewing a problem fairly from various angles; thirdly, the probability that truth does not lie all with *one* party, *one* side, but is likely, from a practical standpoint, to represent a compromise and a meeting of minds. As the meetings proceeded in the New Year's Town Hall, people all over the country, including many students in our schools, listened in eagerly; there was further significant discussion everywhere.

It is fitting, therefore, that the National Council of Teachers of English, seeking to recognize and honor that program which during the past year has done most to awaken greater admiration of effective and exemplary speech and to promote powers of intelligent listening and critical thinking, should turn to America's Town Meeting of the Air for its first award in this important realm of Speaking and Listening.

Because the Town Meeting maintains a consistently high level of excellence in the presentation of a discussion program, because this program is based on a democratic exchange of opinions among national leaders and experts, because well-directed questions and responses form an essential part of the procedure, because topics for discussion are selected that are vital concern to all citizens, and because the listening audience is trained to discriminate between emotion and objectivity, between speciousness and truth, the National Council of Teachers of English takes great pleasure in making this award. It is a great pleasure too that to receive the award I may now call on the man who by his consummate skill in arranging his programs so that they must succeed, his sincerity and fairness in conducting discussion as a moderator, and his deep devotion to America has made America's Town Meeting of the Air a potent national institution. You are now going to listen to one of the most famous voices in America—Mr. George V. Denny.

***Special One Time
Performance of
Shakespeare's "Richard
III" (CBS)***

Laurence Olivier, the great English actor, has demonstrated in both

England and the United States during the last year or two that Shakespeare need not, in the old theatrical phrase, "spell ruin." He has made it clear that, on the contrary, Shakespeare, properly and intelligently presented, still can weave a magic spell over hearts and minds still is the great master of dramatic effects and poetic beauty. His photoplay "Henry V," showed that Shakespeare even has close kinship with the technical effects of which Hollywood is so proud. In New York City, last Spring, Mr. Olivier and his London Company gave a series of Shakespearean and other classic performances that produced immediately the most gratifying of all symbols to the actor's heart—the sign at the box-office S. R. O.

To give the vast non-New York audience an opportunity of at least listening to Mr. Olivier and his company the Columbia Broadcasting System undertook to provide them with time on the air. The program was made a special feature of that remarkable and fruitful enterprise, the Columbia workshop. To give "Richard III" properly, the network extended the length of the broadcast from half an hour to an hour and a half—thereby performing a genuine public and literary service. The play was adapted for radio by Elizabeth

and James Hart, the latter one of the associate script editors of the CBS program division. In the course of the script ingenious use was made of segments from others of Shakespeare's chronicle plays. Both the Workshop and the writing division were supervised by Robert J. Landry. The broadcast itself was co-directed by John Burrell of the "Old Vic" Company and Richard Sanville of CBS. The play, as those who listened to it will testify, proved to be remarkably intelligible, with a minimum of the absurdities which so often mar the modern person's enjoyment of Shakespeare's dramas.

It is further fitting, therefore, that the National Council of Teachers of English, seeking to recognize and honor that program which has done most to promote a greater appreciation for and understanding of

our literary heritage and to awaken greater love of beautiful writing and beautiful speech should make its award to this distinguished CBS production of "Richard III."

Because it presented a magnificent cast in the presentation of a great classic, because it made modern audiences keenly aware of the supreme skill of Shakespeare as a dramatist, and because it utilized radio techniques effectively in the interpretation of literature, the National Council of Teachers of English takes great pleasure in making this first award in the realm of Reading and Writing to the CBS and Laurence Olivier production of "Richard." It is a privilege that I may call upon Mr. Edward S. Murrow, Vice-president of Columbia Broadcasting System, to accept the award in the name of the network of which he is an eminent member.

The following members of the Council have been nominated as Directors representing the Elementary Section: Miss Alvina Treut, New York University; Miss Hattie Parrott, State Department of Education, North Carolina; Miss Margaret Hampel, Oklahoma Agriculture and Mechanical College; Miss Jennie Campbell, State Board of Education, Utah. The following persons have

been nominated as Members of the Elementary Section Committee: Miss Lillian Paukner, Curriculum Director, Milwaukee; Dr. Cecelia Unzicker, Supervisor of the Language Arts, Cincinnati; Miss Mabel Rice, Whittier College, Whittier, Calif.; Dr. Leland Jacobs, Ohio State University. Elementary Section, Nominating Committee,

RUTH STRICKLAND, Chairman.

Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVOTNY*

Radio

Although Cleveland is well known for its use of radio as a direct teaching tool whereby a master teacher carries through the complete lesson, most educational radio today may be characterized as an outgrowth of the supplementary philosophy. The radio broadcast, it is believed, should be used as a supplementary tool just as the map, the globe, charts, movies, and pictures are used to contribute to curriculum development.

Stress is placed on the *utilization* of the broadcast, for its chief value lies in its integration with classroom work. Radio administrators will admit that the very finest radio program has negligible value in the hands of an indifferent teacher who simply turns it on and off without taking the time to integrate it, in the minds of the children, with their current fields of study. To assist the teacher in using a broadcast, most educational series are now accompanied by a teacher's manual which contains a synopsis of the program, as well as carefully developed suggestions for class activities, "Before the broadcast," "During the broadcast," and "After the broadcast." Frequent-

ly a listing of key words for vocabulary development are included, and some add a bibliography of supplementary books in the field.

Citations in utilization are presented each year, as part of the program of the School Broadcast conference, to the teachers who, in the opinion of the judges, make an outstanding contribution in the use of a radio broadcast. In the field of elementary English, an award was presented this year to Mrs. Lavinia Powers, William Barton Rogers School, Hyde Park, Massachusetts, for her use of the program, *Living Literature*, a program presented by WBZ, Boston, Massachusetts.

A statement released by the judges of the utilization awards at this year's conference indicates that they feel that although excellent work in the field of radio utilization is being carried on throughout the country, teachers as a whole do not submit an adequate presentation of their activities. The judges are interested in vivid descriptions of utilization procedure, as well as samples of follow-

*Miss Novotny, a teacher in the Chicago Public Schools is a member of the Council's Committee on Radio and Photoplay, and was formerly a member of the Chicago Radio Council.

up work inspired by the broadcast. This year, June 15 has been set as the date on which entries may be submitted. For further information on the 1947 Utilization Award, write to Mr. George Jennings, Director, School Broadcast Conference, 228 North La Salle Street, Chicago 1, Illinois.

Although broadcasts in social studies, science, or even mathematics are related to the English field by alert teachers who correlate them through the use of speech work, vocabulary building, or as background for extensive reading, the children's literature programs lend themselves most naturally to an enrichment of the classroom work. Teacher librarians have achieved outstanding success in their use of these programs to stimulate wider reading. Miss Mary Mulroy, Principal of the Bryn Mawr Elementary School, Chicago, reports that her librarian, Miss Lauretta Carroll, successfully circulated books among the first and second grade students as a result of using *Bag O' Tales*, a Kg-1-2 grade literature broadcast presented by WBEZ, Chicago Public Schools. Mrs. Magner, script writer, stated that she based the series on books for those grade levels suggested in the listings of the American Library Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. An interesting outcome was

the fact that parents became so interested that they asked the school to suggest books from these listings which they might buy for their children's home libraries.

Another program which has aroused considerable interest in reading is *Quizdown*, now being aired in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Miami, Florida; Zanesville, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; San Diego, California; Chicago, Illinois; and Detroit, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids in Michigan. Devised to give children from 9 to 11 a chance to participate in their own radio program, it is a question contest between teams of different schools from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Scores are based on correct and complete answers on current school work, and the school having the highest score is awarded a set of Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia. The opposing team is given a beautiful American flag.

University stations, too, present programs designed especially for children. Station WSUI, State University of Iowa, presents *The Children's Hour* for younger children, "A program devoted entirely to the grade school child who lives in the world of make-believe."

For information concerning programs available in your area, write to the Educational Director of your

local stations. Ask to be placed on his mailing list for program information.

Recordings

Those interested in a wire recorder might investigate one that was on display at the School Broadcast Conference. This operates by means of magazine loading of three different sizes: 15 minutes, one-half hour, or one hour. It has the compactness of a small table radio: 12 inches by 6 inches by 6 inches. The weight is only 30 pounds. Its use would be unlimited, because magazines may be cleared of sound and used for new recordings hundreds of times, or partially cleared and revised. If desired, the magazines may be filed for reference. Each one takes up no more space than a pocket-size book. For further information, write to the Frederick Hart & Co., Inc., Sales Office: 350 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York.

From the United States Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C., you may obtain a reprint of "Setting Up a Recordings Library," by Alice W. Manchester, which appeared in the Educational Research Bulletin, Vol. XXIII (April 19, 1944), pp. 89-92. This explains the organization and administration of a recording library of teaching aids as set up by the Teaching Aids Laboratory at

Ohio State University, and provides valuable suggestions for making a library of this kind accessible.

Evidence of the growing interest in children's record albums was seen in the large display available for Christmas shoppers. Production and distribution outstripped printed listings, so that it is impossible to determine the exact number of new recordings available. Best of the new sets released by Columbia and featuring movie star Gene Kelly are *Peter Rabbit*, *Nursery Songs, Volume I*, *The Little Red Hen*, and *The Shoemaker and the Elves*. Of interest to those who enjoy Nila Mack and her "Let's Pretend" Company Saturday morning broadcasts will be their albums: *Cinderella*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Puss-in-Boots*. Columbia also presents two other outstanding personalities: Basil Rathbone with supporting cast in *Peter and the Wolf*, and *Treasure Island* (Stevenson); and Vernon Crane in *Edward, the Dignified Monkey*; *Herman, the Littlest Locomotive*; and *Mike, the Little Tug-Boat*.

Equipment

School Sound Systems, a valuable summary of basic standards, is available from the Radio Section, U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C. Offered as a guide in the

selection and utilization of sound equipment, this pamphlet presents thinking on the part of leading radio manufacturers and representative educators working in the field of audio education.

Interesting reports on the adequacy of new equipment may be found in consumer magazines. *Consumer's Research Bulletin*, Washington, N. J., (\$3.00 per year) presents material on radios in the following issues in 1946: March 26-27; April 7-9; June 18; August 9-10; and on record players, June 18-19. *Consumer Reports*, Consumers Union of United States, Inc., 17 Union Square, NYC 3, (\$4.00 per year with weekly Bread & Butter news sheet), provides ratings and discussion of radio-phonographs and slide viewers in the October 1946 issue; and presents information on

radios with FM, a discussion of frequency modulation, and rating of two television sets in the September, 1946, issue.

Publications

Although *See and Hear*, a comparatively new international journal of audio-visual education, does not seem to be available on newsstands, it has already established a reputation for excellence among its subscribers. One reader stated, "It's more *see* than *hear*," which is a just observation when one checks the ration of pages devoted to radio and recordings with those devoted to visual aids. However, it presents an excellent overview of current news in the field, and should be on your reference shelf. Cost per school year is \$2.00, or \$3.00 with the Yearbook. Address *See and Hear*, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

THE TEACHER'S PROBLEMS

(Continued from page 85)

for a period of time and assume full responsibility for the instruction of a class. Through such experience they would see how they could assist teachers more effectively.

Undeniably, one of the greatest services that supervisors can render teachers is to help assemble and provide necessary teaching materials. Another great service is to assist teachers in examining, studying, and planning for pupils who present exceptional problems and abilities. A third service is to arrange for frequent observation and discussion periods among classroom teachers who are confronted with similar problems.

The Educational Scene

A number of recent articles in the professional magazines deal with the subject of manuscript writing in the elementary school. Miss Ada R. Polkinghorne, reporting studies conducted by the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago in the December, 1946 issue of the *Elementary School Journal*, writes that 89.3 per cent of the 182 schools participating in the study used manuscript writing for beginning instruction. In 66.4 per cent of the schools the shift from manuscript to cursive writing takes place in grades 3 or above, while in 17.6 per cent of the schools manuscript writing is employed throughout the grades. These findings in general corroborate the conclusions recently made by Dr. Frank N. Freeman in an article on the same subject in the March, 1946 issue of the *Elementary School Journal*.

The Journal of Educational Research for November, 1946 includes an article on the use of manuscript writing in South African schools. The author, J. de V. Heese, reports a fairly elaborate experiment in which it appears that the most effective method of teaching handwriting is to introduce the child

first to manuscript writing and then to shift to cursive fairly early in his elementary school career.

Evelyn Gibbs Rogers raises the question in the October 16, 1946 issue of the *Educational Research Bulletin* of the College of Education of Ohio State University, why so many hopeful and earnest teachers adopt traditional methods after a year or so of actual teaching, remarking that "progressive techniques are all very well but that they do not work." Miss Rogers points out that the progressive ideas taught in schools of education are sound enough, but that conditions in the typical school make their application difficult. She believes that prospective teachers should be warned about these conditions and that they should recognize the limitations under which they will work. She advocates that schools of education ought to require of incoming instructors at least a year of sub-college teaching, for the sake of better perspective. Moreover, schools of education should widen their appeal for school reform into the popular press, the radio, or any organ which will reach the average uneducated but well meaning member of the board of education.

A "try-out edition" of *Self Evaluation in the Elementary School*, a joint project of the Elementary Classroom Teachers Association and the Elementary School Principals Association in the state of New Jersey, sets up standards by which administrators and teachers may evaluate the effectiveness of their own work. It does not pretend to offer a score card, but provides guidance in an objective study of the results of the educative process.

A very useful chart describing children's growth in language arts, and embracing the scope and sequence of the curriculum in language arts for the elementary and junior high school year is published by the Bureau of Reference, Research and Statistics, Division of Curriculum Research, Board of Education of the City of New York. The development of the chart is part of the research project in the language arts that is being developed under the direction of William H. Bristow and Margaret B. Parke. The director of the Bureau is Eugene A. Nifenecker.

Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of February, 1947: for boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age, *Patty Paints a Picture*, by Laura Bannon Whitman, \$2.00; for boys and girls 9, 10, and

11 years of age, *Animal Inn*, by Virginia Moe, Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50; for older girls, 12 to 16 years of age, *More Pictures to Grow Up With*, by Katharine Gibson, American Studio Books, \$3.50; and for older boys, 12 to 16 years of age, *Bonny's Boy*, by F. E. Rechnitzer, Winston, \$2.00.

The National Conference on Research in English will hold meetings in conjunction with the convention of the American Association of School Administrators, on Monday and Tuesday, March 3 and 4, 1947. The program is as follows:

Monday, March 3, 1947. 8:30 a. m. Breakfast meeting for Conference members. Friends of Conference members actively interested in research in the field of elementary language are also welcome to attend upon invitation from a Conference member. Hotel Ambassador.

Tuesday, March 4, 1947. 12 noon. Luncheon meeting. Following the luncheon, the following program revolving around the central theme of readability will be presented:

Dr. Rudolf Flesch—A Readability Formula in Practice.

Dr. William S. Gray—The Progress and Present Status of Research on Readability.

Dr. Emmett A. Betts—Readability, Its Application to the Elementary School.

Dr. Margaret Hampel—Progress Report on the forthcoming bulletin of the Conference summarizing unpublished research, 1940-46.

Carl H. Milam, Executive Secretary of the American Library Association, predicts that the desire for good public library service will be greater in the next few years than before the war, because millions of men enjoyed such service in the army. Reviewing wartime developments in the annual report of the Association the emergency reliance of industry, labor and government on libraries will result in increased peacetime use. He also believes that appropriations for library service will rise, because "plans for library improvement and extension will have the support of ex-servicemen and their organizations."

The ALA International Relations Office in Washington reports that, "4600 separate sets of 367 periodicals published in the United States have been shipped to 14 countries, under the terms of a Rockefeller Foundation grant to the Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas.

In addition, the ALA operated 15 other projects for the acquisition and shipment of books to many countries of the world, involving expenditures of large funds provided by foundations, governments and private donors. The significance of these shipments is evidenced by the warm welcome they receive".

The addition of "opaque projector units" to its school service is regarded by the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, N. J., among its noteworthy activities last year, according to its *Thirty-seventh Annual Report*.

These opaque projector units consist of sets of pictures based on teaching units in the public schools of Elizabeth. The pictures deal with various aspects of a single subject. They are mounted on a standard size background, numbered, and listed in a table of contents. Each picture has an annotated script as a basis for lecture or study. Each set of about 30 plates is packed in a special container for loan.

The librarian of Elizabeth reports that schools are the principal users of these opaque projector units but that clubs and lecturers have found them of value.

Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Elizabeth Guilfoile, Dorothy E. Smith, Kathryn E. Hodapp, La Tourette Stockwell, Charlemae Rollins, Helen R. Sattley, Audrey F. Carpenter, Hannah M. Lindahl, Frances E. Whitehead, Jean Gardiner Smith, and Ivah Green. Unsigned reviews are by the editor.]

For Teachers

Teaching Social Studies in Elementary Schools. by Edgar Bruce Wesley and Mary A. Adams. D. C. Heath & Co.

To define the social studies program and to implement it is the purpose of this volume. "The social studies—deal directly with people, their institutions, interrelations and social achievements.—They are fundamental in nurturing wholesome personalities, in facilitating social adjustments among pupils, and above all, in promoting the understanding and practice of democracy."

The authors develop this broad concept in the three chapters that deal with the present status of elementary education, the social development of the child, and the analysis of society. In the four chapters following they deal with the curriculum, the resources and equip-

ment, the basic procedures, and the evaluation of the program. The book is at once a thorough-going introduction to the social studies program of the modern school, and an organized and detailed guide to the teacher.

The implementation chapters vary in their critical value. Descriptions of social studies programs are offered with little attempt to evaluate current practice. Types of reading and study material are described and rather uncritically recommended. It is interesting to note that this is somewhat worked-over ground. In the newer fields, there is excellent presentation.

The chapter on using Audio-Visual Materials is highly valuable. The sections on "Getting Acquainted with the Community" and "Suggested Sources and Resources" are richly suggestive. E. G.

For Younger Children

Penny and Peter. By Carolyn Haywood. Illustrated by the author. Harcourt, \$2.00.

Did you ever take live crabs home from the seashore and have them escape on the train? Penny and Peter seemed to have a genius for getting into difficulties, but they always

got out of them satisfactorily. These gay stories ring true. Beneath the humor and fun there runs an undercurrent of happy home life and mutual understanding that is wholesome and fine. Young children like to have the Penny books read to them; by the time they are in the third grade they can read them for themselves.

D. E. S.

Ollie the Ostrich. Story by Ruth White. Pictures by Avery Johnson. Thomas Nelson & Sons, \$1.00.

The story of Ollie the Ostrich who was so very shy and how he overcame his shyness. Picture book age will love it.

K. E. H.

Mystery of the Five Bright Keys. By Mary Urmston. Illustrated by Robert Smith. Doubleday, \$2.00.

The missing brass keys to the front door of their home serve as an incentive for the four Allen children to try to find them. The recovery of the keys introduces the children to the neighborhood and makes them feel that they really belong. This new story by the author of "The Mystery at the Old Barn" will answer the demand for mystery stories for younger children.

K. E. H.

The Little Island. By Golden MacDonald. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday, \$2.50.

A truly beautiful and unusual book that will evoke the imagination and inherent love of nature in every child who sees it. The story of a little island in the ocean, and how the seasons and the storms and night and day changed it, how the lobsters, seals, and gulls, and many other things lived on it and of the secret that the kitten who came to visit it found out about. A must, for every child's library.

L. T. S.

The Golden Encyclopedia. By Dorothy A. Bennett. Illustrated by Cornelius De Witt. Simon and Schuster. pp. 125, \$2.50.

This book provides the answers to all the major Where, When, Why, and How questions asked by youngsters from the time they can talk. In so doing, it will be a cheerful mother's helper, and father's too, while teachers of the lower grades might well capitalize upon its charm to instill early interest and habits in the use of the encyclopedia. Children who can read will enjoy finding the answers for themselves, because the language is clear and simple and the illustrations provide fascinating visual aid. In both text and illustrations an effort has been made to show the relationship of ideas and things, and the accumulative effect of good text and 1500 items pictured in full color, and 500 in black

and white, is to make this an extremely valuable book. L. T. S.

The Monkey with a Notion. By Glenn O. Blough. Illustrated by John F. Decuir.

A lively tale of the adventures of a monkey who lived in a pet shop. The author is a teacher and writer in the field of science and Decuir is a motion picture illustrator. This is the virgin effort of both in the field of children's literature. They make a good team and children 6-10 will enjoy the results of their combined abilities. L. T. S.

Christmas Tales for Reading Aloud.

Compiled and Adapted by Robert Lohan. Stephen Daye Press, \$3.75.

A pleasant anthology of old favorites. The average reading time of each is fifteen minutes. It is subtitled "A Treasury for Young and Old" and is so. The contents vary from the Gospel According to Saint Luke, to Lincoln Steffen's "A Miserable Merry Christmas" and Clement Moore's "The Night Before Christmas." Well printed. L. T. S.

Once There Was a King. By Raymond MacDonald Alden. Illustrated by Evelyn Copelman. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

A new edition of the book first published in 1922 as *The Boy Who Found the King*. Nine short stories, all with the touch of magic that

characterized *Why the Chimes Rang*. Even those who think they have outgrown fairy tales will find much to think about in these subtle stories.

D. E. S.

For the Middle Years

Slappy Hooper, The Wonderful Sign Painter. By Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy. Illustrated by Ursula Koering. Houghton-Mifflin, \$2.00.

The signs painted by Slappy Hooper, the best, fastest, and biggest sign painter in the Middle West, had one great fault—they were too Real. The bread sign looked so much like a real loaf of bread the birds tried to eat it; the stove sign attracted all cold hoboes with its heat and even blistered the paint on the parked automobiles! This failing almost caused the downfall of the great artist, Slappy, but not quite, since he had one staunch friend, a little boy named Mike Flint.

Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy have collaborated in another industrial folk tale similar to their, *The Fast Sooner Hound*. This one will be popular with boys and girls of ages 9 to 12. They will enjoy it because of its rollicking humor and also because there are a lot of attractive illustrations which are just perfect for this kind of story. C. R.

Old Con and Patrick. By Ruth Sawyer. Illustrated by Cathal O'Toole. Viking, \$2.00:

Patrick Boyle, crippled by infantile paralysis, lives with his mother and Old Con, his Irish granddad. Old Con is aided in helping Patrick adjust himself by Mr. McPherson, who is "half-a-dog long and a quarter-of-a dog high" and Funny, a pet blue jay. Altogether a most satisfying story. Frontispiece is especially attractive. K. E. H.

The Picture Story of China. By Emily Hahn. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Reynal & Hitchcock, \$2.50.

This book will be welcomed by children and teachers alike. It is remarkable how much information has been packed into fifty pages: home and school life, religion, history and government, all written in simple narrative style that moves. Of course, Kurt Wiese's informal colored illustrations on almost every page are exactly right for, like the author, he has lived in China and loves it, too. D. E. S.

The Picture Story of Holland. By Dola de Jong. Illustrated by Gerard Hordyk. Reynal & Hitchcock, \$2.00.

Author and artist, both native Hollanders, have collaborated to make this beautiful book that successfully interprets their homeland

to American children. It tells of home and school life, holidays and festivals; it describes the land and gardens, homes and other buildings, bicycling and skating, shipping and diamond cutting. There is very little about the history of Holland, but the form of government is mentioned, and Holland's outlook for the future. The illustrations on almost every page are lively and colorful. D. E. S.

Picture Stories from the Old Testament.

Picture Stories from the Life of Christ. Both by Marian Madison. Illustrated by Warner Kreuter. Wilcox & Follett.

There are ten stories in each book. For every story there is a full page picture in color. Although there seems to have been nice attention paid to the animals, vegetation, manners, and customs of Bible times, the color is too garish to be attractive. It is unfortunate that the text in both books has been condensed and popularized to the point of being ludicrous. D. E. S.

God's First Children. By Esther Salminen. Illustrated by Kaj and Per Beckman. Roy, \$2.00.

Twenty-four stories retold from the Old Testament and first published in Sweden in 1944. They are simple, dramatic stories that chil-

dren can readily understand. The confusion of the "begats" and the battles and the intrigues has been omitted, leaving Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Daniel, and the prophesy of the coming of the Messiah. Any retelling of the Bible into colloquial speech loses dignity, rhythm, beauty, and impressiveness. If one wants *only* the stories shorn of the magic of the words of the King James version, this is one of the better adaptations. The book is printed in large, clear, well-spaced type on excellent paper, and has many attractive illustrations in color and black and white.

D. E. S

America's Paul Revere. By Esther Forbes. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50.

This is an outstanding contribution to children by a most important author and a most important artist. The idea for pictures came first, inspired by the author's Pulitzer prize-winning biography of Paul Revere. For many months, thereafter, author and artist worked to produce this thoroughly integrated piece of work. It is picture-book size, 46 pages long, with 17 almost full page story-telling colored drawings, three of which are double-spread. There are black and white pictures on every other page. Fourth graders will be

able to read the beautifully simple text; seventh and eighth graders will thrill to it. Should be a part of every school.

H. R. S.

Captain John Smith. By Ruth Langland Holberg. Illustrated by Ava Lisbeth Morgan. Crowell, 1946.

A fine biography of the founder of Jamestown from the time he was a seven-year old lad longing for adventure at sea through his capture by the Turks to his exploration of the New World. Attractive black and white drawings. Grades 4 to 8.

H. R. S.

The Puppet Man and Other Stories. By Barbara Young. Pictures by Mary Barton. Reynal and Hitchcock, \$2.00.

The charming stories and the lively verse in this book will delight the young reader. There is variety of content that will be satisfying to every taste. Attractive illustrations, some in color and others in black and white, add to the charm of the little volume. From the puppet man in the first story, some children learn how much they have to be thankful for; in the last story, a beautiful legend, two hungry children experience the joy that comes from sharing. Although the nostalgic tone of the story, "Something About Spring," may not be fully appreciated by

children, the delicate beauty of its poetic, rhythmical language will appeal to them.

H. M. L.

The Snow Owl's Secret. By Harriet Evatt. Illustrations by the author. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

Smallboy, an Ojibway lad, is stirred by the words of the ancient Dreamer that some day a young brave would see the shadow of the Snow Owl and would go forth in quest of the long-lost Ojibway treasure. With faith in the Dreamer's prophecy, Smallboy makes the journey. There is beauty and magic in this exciting tale as told and illustrated by the author. In addition, there is interesting information about the Indians of Bear Island. H. M. L.

Vagabonds All. By E. K. Seth-Smith. Illustrated by Anne Vaughn. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.00.

Born in Shakespeare's time, Miles had the same troubles at home and at school that boys do today, so he ran away and joined a group of travelling players, making friends with Kit Marlowe's son. All went well until the boys disobeyed advice and fell into the hands of gypsies who turned them over to a rogue who trained them to be thieves. Making their escape from this situation only led them into fresh escapades. Eventually the distracted father found his son and the book

ended happily with the two boys headed for Oxford University together.

The opinion of a sixth grade boy concerning this book was, "It's slow starting, but after the beginning I liked it a lot." The background of Elizabethan England is an unusual one in children's books and is vividly done. Black and white drawings fill in the scenes in a satisfying way.

A. F. C.

Tinker Tim. By Sanford Tousey. Doubleday, Doran, \$1.50.

Tinker Taylor takes Tim, an orphan, with him on trial as his helper on his tinker's wagon. They live the life of the open road and on fair days Tinker Taylor races Lady Bess in the sulky races. When Tinker Taylor is hurt in a race by an unscrupulous driver, Tim takes over and drives Lady Bess over the finish line. Tim has proven himself and he and Tinker Taylor head south to spend the winter. Will be loved by all boys who have enjoyed the other Tousey stories.

K. E. H.

Narizona's Holiday. By Addison Burbank and Govelle Newcomb. Illustrated by Addison Burbank. Longmans, Green, \$2.00.

Narizona is a small and mischievous loving creature,—a tejoncita or coati, much like the raccoon. First as a circus performer, then as Chepe's be-

loved pet, Narizona's adventures take her "out of the frying pan into the fire." Withal, the characters are never truly living. The Burbanks are too intent on creating an atmosphere. Their background is too labored. Just as in the earlier story, *The Cedar Deer*, the characterization is unrelievedly wooden. F. E. W.

Cap'n Dow and the Hole in the Doughnut. By Le Grand. Illustrated by the author. Abingdon-Cokesbury, \$1.00.

Substituting a hole for the uncookable middle of the doughnut is the gist of this story, supposed to have been recounted off the coast of Maine. This is a Paul-Bunyanish tale in which the captain finds the doughnut hole a handy means of looping his doughnut over the wheel spokes in a storm. Their lightness too is responsible for his safety in a storm which washes the crew (heavy with solid doughnuts) over and down. There is a repetition for story telling, but the illustrations and story lack vigor. The book is fully as stodgy as the doughnuts without the holes. F. E. W.

The Three Miracles. By Catherine Blanton. Pictures by Leo Politi. John Day, \$2.00.

Near Mexico City lived lazy little Juan and his stubborn donkey Pablo, and their selfish American

friend Paul who had to walk on crutches. However, during a trip to Mexico City to visit the Virgin of Guadalupe Juan became energetic, Pablo was no longer stubborn, and Paul learned to be generous. Although they did not find the Virgin, three apparent miracles happened anyway. This short book has good print and paper, amusing illustrations. While not outstanding, it has more appeal than most Mexican stories. A. F. C.

Gold in Mosquito Creek. By Dickson Reynolds. Illustrated by Gratton Condon. Nelson, \$2.00.

Two brothers trying to escape from a grizzly bear discover gold at the foot of an uprooted tree. They bring back a load of gold dust for a prospector friend. Gangsters kidnap Tom and steal the dust. Randy working with the police locates the hideout and finds his brother. All the characters say the traditional things, the man with one earring looks sinister, and the tenderfoot from the east proves his mettle in spite of his clothes. I have no doubt that boys will like the book but it has little to offer that is fresh.

A. F. C.

Pocahontas: Brave Girl. By Flora Warren Seymour. Illustrated by Charles V. John. The Bobbs-Merrill Co., \$1.50.

In this book the author of "Bird Girl: Sacagawea" has made an interesting addition to the childhood of Famous American Series. Under her skillful, imaginative touch Pocahontas comes alive and full of warm, endearing little-girl traits. The tale cleverly leads up to Pocahontas' saving of Captain Smith because of her desire to "adopt a paleface". It continues with authentic historical facts about her later life, weaving in some colonial history while so doing. Type is large, vocabulary simple, and the narrative moves along rapidly with much conversation. Silhouette illustrations are arresting and plentiful.

I. G.

Understood Betsy. By Dorothy Canfield. Illustrated by Catherine Barnes. Holt, \$2.00.

A new edition of an old favorite published in 1917. Elizabeth Ann, a neurotic little girl, pampered by her city aunts, finds a normal life with the aunts in rural Vermont. The slow development toward independence and being both understood and understanding seems convincing. A sure fire story for little girls who are making the transition to books which are more than a series of incidents.

J. G. S.

A Picture Almanac for Boys and Girls.

Designed and illustrated by Samuel Niseuson, with set by Grace L. Kohl. Edited by William Hen-

derson. Garden City Publishing Company, \$2.00.

A page for each day of the year. Brief biographies of the world's great men and women, quotations, facts from science and history, and appropriate anecdotes, amply illustrated, constitute the subject matter of the 365 pages.

This is the Moon. By Marion B. Cothren. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Coward-McCann, \$2.00.

In this informative book, characterized by scientific accuracy, interesting style, and effective illustrations, will be found answers to the many questions which children frequently ask about the moon. Boys and girls in the middle grades will be intrigued by the description of an imaginary trip to the moon, a trip that may some day become a reality by traveling in a rocket ship steered by radar and driven by atomic energy. Not less interesting is the section of the book which includes moon myths from Greece, Rome, Sweden, China, Japan, India, Africa, and the North American Indians.

H. M. L.

Skookum. By Eva Knox Evans. Illustrated by Raffaello Busoni. Putman's, \$2.00.

This will be a favorite of many children for a long time. The story of five Eskimo dogs, but especially

Skookum, the biggest, who live in Alaska and are raised and trained by Mr. Ranook and young Jimmy Tobuk. Written by a person who knows Alaska, dogs and children, and can make a delightful tale out of basically educational material. The good print and Busoni's black and white drawings increase its charm. For ages 5-10. L. T. S.

Tales of an Old Siberian Trapper. By Vitaly Bianchi. Translated by N. Orloff. Illustrated by Y. Vasnetsow. Colonial House, Philadelphia, \$1.50.

These stories handed down to us by the woodsmen of old Siberia have much in common with *Aesop's Fables* and Kipling's *Jungle Book*. They show traces of their primitive origin by the quality of their imagination and humor, not by a use of ferocious details. My favorite is *Lulia, the Grebe*, how she made the earth come up out of the sea, and why she had to go on living on the water. The illustrations catch happily the folklore spirit of these tales, which won't scare, and will delight any youngster 6-9, especially those who like animals. L. T. S.

For Early Adolescents

Sun Yat-Sen. By Nina Brown Baker. Illustrated by Jeanyee Wong. Vanguard, \$2.50.

Those of us who have depended upon the other biographies by Mrs. Baker have taken it for granted that she would turn to one of the "Father of New China." Beautifully done, as are all her others, practical, interesting, encouraging, this book is an outstanding contribution to the history of man's fight for freedom. Use it freely in literature and social studies classes from sixth grade on up. This reviewer has two regrets, however. There is no picture of Sun Yat-Sen inside the book. And it might have been well for American children, through one or two vivid incidents, to have realized that the U. S. had had within her borders for many months a great man of world history, often disparagingly treated—just "another foreigner." H. R. S.

Heart of Danger. By Howard Pease. Doubleday, \$2.00.

Perhaps the best of all Tod Moran stories. During World War II, Tod and a young violinist-composer enter France on a dangerous mission as U. S. secret agents. Tod is not quite sure of his companion, but Rudy proves that a temperamental musician can be the bravest of men. He eventually even faces death and Buchenwald prison camp in order to save his non-Jewish father who is head of the Jewish underground, work he has undertaken out of love for

Rudy's Jewish mother. How Rudy returns from Buchenwald after two years to face life, knowing that he can never play a violin again, is almost poignantly told. Packed with action—and meaningful. Sixth grade and up.

H. R. S.

Madeline Takes Command. By Ethel C. Brill. Illustrated by Bruce Adams. Whittlesey, \$2.00.

Madeline de Verchéres was a real girl who held a fort near Montreal against raiding Iroquois Indians in 1692. Marshalling her staff of three small boys and one old man she held off the attackers for a week until a rescue party came to her relief. It was her quick mind that thought of many ruses to make the Indians think there were at least twenty men within the stockade, and her courage that kept her assistants at their posts.

There is plenty of action to sustain interest in the reader, and the story makes a vivid impression of character and times. Seventeen full page drawings and many smaller ones scattered throughout, contribute to the tense mood of the story. Both boys and girls of junior high school age will rate this one as "neat."

A. F. C.

The Lion's Paw. By Robb White. Illustrated by Ralph Ray. Doubleday, \$2.00.

A brother and sister, Nick and Penny, run away from the orphanage in which they live. They become shipmates of Ben Sturges, a lad of fifteen years, who owns a sailboat and has promised his father to find a sea shell called a Lion's Paw. The difficulties which Ben and his new shipmates encounter on their trip from the west coast of Florida to the Gulf of Mexico are woven into a narrative abounding with rapid action and suspense. This exciting story with its effective illustrations will hold the attention of boys and girls who find vicarious adventure satisfying.

H. M. L.

The Sea is Blue. Written and illustrated by Marie Lawson. Viking, \$2.00.

The story of Timothy Daniel Burney, an orphan, who lives with his Uncle Captain. Timmy is a dreamer but also loves the sea. At Uncle Captain's suggestion Timmy and Cissy make their own rainbows from colors they find around them and often use the sea for blue. To Uncle Captain's secret delight, Timmy goes to sea and when he returns thinks he has lost Cissy who has grown up while he has been away. Timmy is hurt rescuing survivors of a shipwreck and finds Cissy again when she brings him a rainbow. A

beautiful book profusely illustrated in blue and gray. Romance will appeal to older girls. K. E. H.

Tchaikovsky. By Antoni Gronovicz. Drawings by George Avison. Thomas Nelson, \$2.50.

This very fine biography of Tchaikovsky written for young people will be read with absorbing interest. Tchaikovsky's life and music are unforgettablely associated as one moves with him through the story from his first composition played at the age of four, to the peak of his fame and to his last days. A list of all Tchaikovsky's compositions is included. I. G.

Meriwether Lewis: Boy Explorer. By Charlotta M. Bebenroth. Illustrated by Edward Caswell. Bobbs-Merrill, \$1.50.

This book is a combination of a teacher's understanding of what children like to read, of faithful research, and of a considerable talent for storytelling and writing. Simply written with a maximum of conservation and a minimum of explanatory details, this story will appeal to boys and girls alike. It uses adventure, humor, excitement, and tenderness, in giving an authentic account of Lewis' early life and events leading up to and after his famous trip to the Southwest. Silhouette illustrations are an added attraction. I. G.

The Mystery of Batty Ridge. By Alan Gregg. Doubleday, \$2.00.

A fantastic mystery story involving poison gas bombs falling suddenly on farms, gigantic bats flying in the night, control towers that rise from a secluded mountain top, code messages intercepted by monitor cars, experimental planes for the A A F stolen for sale to revolutionary groups in South America—all brought to justice by the traditional "chief" with steel gray eyes. I would not recommend this for school purchase or use. It is too much on the comic strip level of excitement. A. F. C.

Haydn: A Good Life. By David Ewen. Illustrated by Marion Kohs. Holt, \$2.75.

While written primarily for twelve-to-sixteen year olds, this account of the life of Franz Joseph Haydn will hold the interest of all adults who would like to be informed about this famous composer without reading a technical discussion of his works. Beginning with an account of Haydn's early love for music and his subsequent tribulations while becoming a great musician, this very readable biography will appeal to young music lovers. Line drawings add atmosphere and charm. Included are a chronological table of Haydn's life, a parallel table of musical events of his time, and another of world

events. These are preceded by an opus list and one of all available recordings of Haydn's works.

I. G.

Once Is Forever. By Gertrude E. Mallette. Doubleday, \$2.00.

Brian returned from the war disabled; and he and Adrien felt that the hope for his recovery from blindness and other disabilities lay in the atmosphere of the home they were to share. The house turned into a workshop for other veterans. Although the characters are cut to pattern, the slow reader who is ready for a modern love story will find this a satisfying book because the characters are adult.

J. G. S.

Beethoven. By Madeleine Goss. Illustrated by Karl Schultheiss. Holt. pp. 354, \$3.00.

A new and attractive volume in the Holt Musical Biography Series for young music lovers age 12-16. Many of the details selected are exactly those which will interest young people and yet there is no talking down to them. There are several valuable "background aids" in the form of a chronological table of the composer's life, a parallel table of the musical events of his time, and another of world events. There is also a list of all available recordings of the composer's works. Schultheiss's black and white drawings do much to help evoke the spirit of

the late eighteenth century which Miss Goss has also admirably conveyed in the text. The print is excellent and the reproduction of scores is done in sufficiently large staff notation to make it a pleasure rather than an eyestrain to read them.

L. T. S.

A Cookbook for Girls and Boys. By Irma S. Rombauer. Illustrations by Marion Rombauer Becker. Bobbs-Merrill. pp 243, \$2.50.

Mrs. Rombauer has shown good sense in the types of recipes she has included in the 400 in this book and in her textual approach to defining terms and teaching the right methods. However, it is difficult for me to understand how in this day and age any book of this sort could be produced with such apparent unawareness of the value of visual aid by way of illustrations. For example, on the first three pages there is a nutrition chart, and a list of twenty two steps to success in cooking a meal. Both are fundamental. Both are deadly to look at. Most of the kids from 9-15 for whom this book was made will skip them. Most of the kids who use the book may very well have had mothers who have earlier shoed them out of the kitchen or whose own culinary habits may very well need improving. Had the abilities of the illustrator been turned to imaginative,

humorous and practical illustrations of basic procedures instead of the silhouettes which now decorate the chapter headings, Mrs. Rombauer's fundamentally sound approach would have been better served and her readers more ably aided.

L. T. S.

Beggar Boy of Galilee. By Josephine Sanger Lau. Illustrated by Frederick Hogg. Abingdon-Cokesbury, \$2.00.

Mrs. Lau's purpose in writing this book was to bring the time and the land in which Jesus lived a little closer to the boys and girls of today than it usually seems to them and in so doing also "to help them see the face of the Master a little more clearly." She has done this remarkably

well, partly by making the main character a beggar boy of Galilee and by showing the effect upon his life and that of his blind father of the new Teacher and His teachings.

L. T. S.

Romance for Rosa. By Rachel Varble. Doubleday. pp. 276, \$2.00.

An historical romance of Virginia in the late seventeenth century. The heroine is a young English orphan girl sent out as an indentured servant. She works on a Virginia plantation and ultimately is loved and won by a boy from a proud family of Virginia burgesses. Gives a good picture of early colonial life in the south, though the style at points emits wheezy creaks.

L. T. S.

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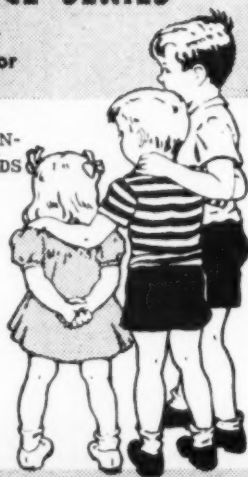
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English Workbook Grade Seven

English Workbook Grade Eight

For Junior High School

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Junior English Two

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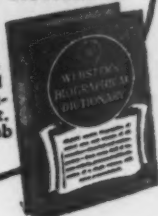


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